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ABSTRACT

This monograph highlights the projects that high school and middle level students have initiated when they have seen a need in their communities, researched the need, and then figured out a way to answer the need. The monograph categorizes these state and national award-winning, self-initiated community projects as follows: aiding the disadvantaged; helping the sick and disabled; campaigning against substance abuse and violence; improving community facilities; promoting volunteerism; assisting senior citizens; promoting health and safety; teaching and mentoring others; promoting citizenship; improving the environment; helping animals; and recognizing the efforts of others. The monograph is intended to be a project idea source for students to turn to when they are looking for a club or individual project. It states that, once a project has been decided upon, planning it properly will ensure its success. (BT)

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"It feels really good when you know you've helped someone, even a little." ALISIA OROSCO

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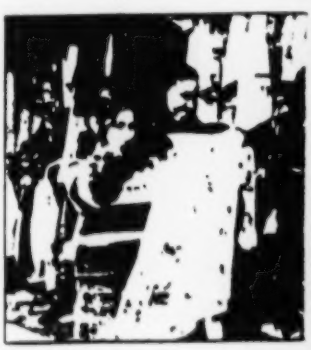
Our Call To Serve Others



Award-Winning, Student-Initiated Service Projects — A Resource for Schools

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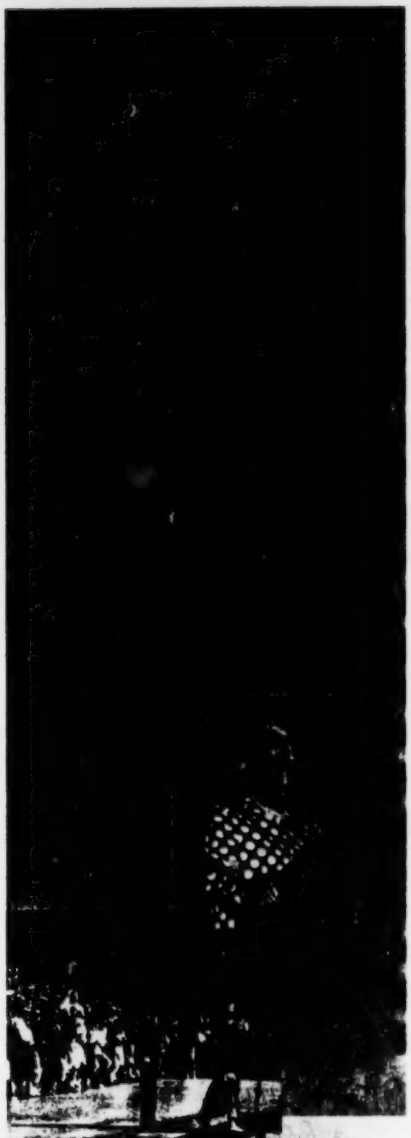
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS • DEPARTMENT OF STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Our Call To Serve Others

Award-Winning, Student-Initiated Service Projects — A Resource for Schools

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS • DEPARTMENT OF STUDENT ACTIVITIES



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National Association of Secondary School Principals

Dept. of Student Activities

1904 Association Dr.

Reston, VA 20191-1537

(703) 860-0200

www.nassp.org

dsa@nassp.org

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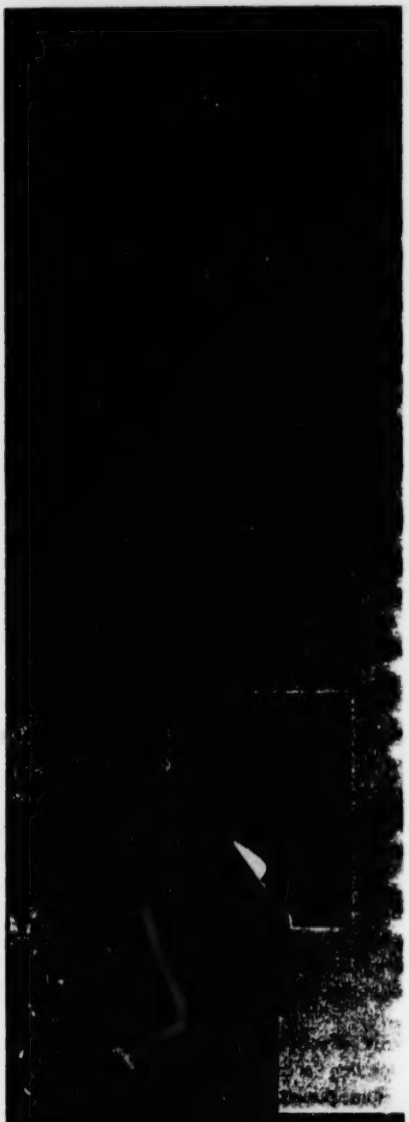

The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards provide a unique opportunity for young people to be recognized for volunteer service. These prestigious awards, sponsored by Prudential and the National Association of Secondary School Principals, are presented annually on the local, state, and national level to middle level and high school youth who have demonstrated outstanding initiative or leadership in serving their communities.

Thousands of awards are presented at the local level each fall. Then in February, the top high school volunteer and middle level volunteer are named in each state, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia. State Honorees receive $1,000, a beautiful silver medallion, and an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C. for several days of recognition events in early May, including award ceremonies, sightseeing tours, and a Congressional reception on Capitol Hill. Runners-up at the state level receive bronze medallions or Certificates of Excellence.

During the Washington events, five middle level and five high school youth are named National Honorees, and receive an additional $5,000, a gold medallion, and a stunning crystal trophy for their schools or youth organizations.

Young people in grades 5-12 can apply for Prudential Spirit of Community Awards through middle level and high schools, Girl Scout councils, or county 4-H organizations. Applications are judged on the basis of personal initiative or leadership, effort, impact, and personal growth. **Program implementation packets are mailed each fall to the building principal in every middle level and high school in the country and to Girl Scout councils and county 4-H organizations. Students or parents should request forms from the building principal or the guidance office, or their local Girl Scout or 4-H organization. Visit www.nassp.org for more information and an application.★**

Foreward and Introduction

FOREWARD

The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards Program is an inspiration to me. After just completing another successful program in partnership with Prudential, I continue to be totally impressed with our young people of today. The Prudential Spirit of Community Initiative Program gives us the chance to recognize kids who, regardless of their scholarship, leadership, or athletic status in school or community have stepped forward and made a difference in the lives of those around them. These young adults saw a need in their community, researched it, and then figured out a way to answer the need. Their initiative and desire coupled with enthusiasm and energy have given us as Americans a reason to be very proud.

In this monograph we have highlighted the projects that high school and middle level students have initiated. We share their accomplishments with you because it is our hope that you and your students will be inspired to replicate some of these award-winning projects within your own communities. We also would like to inspire your students to step forward and initiate projects of their own. Please encourage your students to participate in the Prudential Spirit of Community Awards Program and give them the recognition they deserve at the local, state, and national levels.

As educators, it's our responsibility to teach and guide our young people about serving others. It's also our responsibility to recognize that their efforts make a difference in our lives.

ROCCO M. MARANO
Director, Department of Student Activities

INTRODUCTION: TIPS ON HOW TO BEST USE THIS BOOK

First, these state and national award winning self-initiated community service projects are categorized as follows: aiding the disadvantaged, helping the sick and disabled, campaigning against substance abuse and violence, improving community facilities, promoting volunteerism, assisting senior citizens, promoting health and safety, teaching and mentoring others, promoting citizenship, improving the environment, helping animals, and recognizing the efforts of others.

Second, this book is intended to be a project idea source for your students to turn to when they are looking for a club or individual project. Start by locating the category of interest and then read through for ideas and inspiration. You may find some projects that you'll want to replicate exactly. Or, a project may trigger a whole new way to reach out to your community.

Third, once your club has decided on a project, planning it properly will ensure its success.

To begin, answer the 11 W's of Project Planning:

1. What are you planning to do?
2. Why do you want to do this project?
3. When and where will the activities or events take place?
4. Who will benefit from the project?
5. Who needs to approve the project?
6. When will the basic planning be done?
7. What funds are needed? When will the money be needed? Who will arrange for getting the money?
8. What kind of publicity is needed? When is it needed?
9. What committees are needed? (List the committees, tasks, chairmen, and deadlines.)
10. Who deserves special thank-you notes? Who will write the thank-you notes and when will it be done?
11. Will the project be worthwhile? How will you know?

The 11 W's of Project Planning is taken from NASSP's National Leadership Camp Leadership Curriculum Guide, 1994

We hope that the self sacrifice and determination of these State and National Honorees will inspire you to continue the good work you do as leaders in your school and community.

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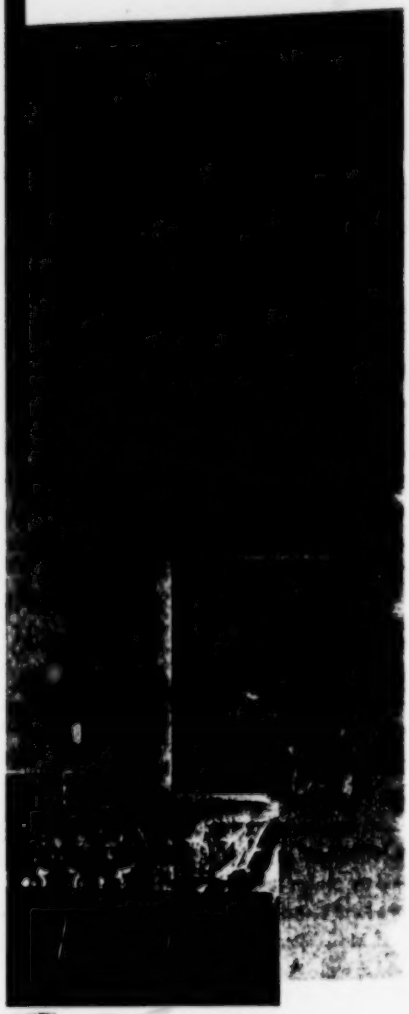

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CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

MARK GIBBS
Mountain Gap Middle School
Huntsville, Alabama
Mark started a new community holiday tradition by organizing a Christmas program for local underprivileged children. To brighten their holiday, Mark worked with his local Optimist Club to offer over 100 underprivileged children a chance to have their photo taken with Santa Claus free of charge. Mark got local stores to donate film and cameras, and to help with advertising costs. ★

TRIOS

LAUREN GARSTEN
Choate Rosemary Hall,
Wallingford, Connecticut
Lauren set up a program to take advantage of all that senior citizens have to offer children, particularly those who have been neglected. Lauren created TRIOS, a high school volunteer program where a child from a local home for abused children and a senior citizen from a nearby nursing home get to know each other on outings to parks, museums, and zoos. Lauren trained the student coordinators. ★

STEPP'N UP

ERIC PERLYN
Pine Crest School
Ft. Lauderdale, Florida
Eric founded Stepp'n Up, a non-profit organization that provided new shoes to needy children in Florida for more than five years. Working with shoe manufacturers and local shoe stores, Eric helped provide new shoes to more than 5,000. This played a significant role in how the children feel about themselves. ★

UNUSED FOOD DONATIONS

DAVID LEVITT
Osceola Middle School
Seminole, Florida
David worked with Tampa Bay Harvest (TBH), an organization that supplies food to the homeless. Working with his school board and TBH, David started a program that resulted in 92 schools donating more than 55,000 pounds of unused food to TBH. David also got his synagogue to donate leftovers from functions. He addressed many groups to inspire others to help the hungry. ★

MISSIONARY WORK

ANNE BERGSTROM
Seneca High School
Seneca, Illinois
Anne worked as a missionary in Papua, New Guinea, for the New Tribes Mission. During her six-week trip, Anne, a certified nursing assistant, helped teach in the mission's school, cooked meals for more than a dozen people and, when the only doctor broke his hand, assisted with medical procedures she had never before attempted. ★

FEEDING THE HOMELESS

THOMAS TSAI
Terre Haute South Vigo High School
Terre Haute, Indiana
Thomas helped homeless people in his community with a unique gift: meat. After several years of volunteer work to help the homeless, Thomas won a $1,000 Golden Rule Award from J.C. Penney and used the money to purchase 600 pounds of meat for a local homeless shelter that had no funds for food. Media attention has led to others donating food as well. ★

STUFFED ANIMALS

HEIDI LARISON
Andover Middle School
Andover Kansas
Heidi started her own campaign to purchase stuffed animals for her local police, fire, and emergency medical service departments to give to children in crisis situations. Heidi collected donations and organized car washes to raise the money needed to buy the stuffed animals. Ultimately, she was able to donate 71 stuffed animals to the Andover emergency services departments. ★

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LET SOMEONE WALK IN YOUR SHOES

STEPHANIE ADAS
Orchard Lake Middle School
West Bloomfield, Michigan
Stephanie organized the Let Someone Walk in Your Shoes school shoe drive. After she discovered that her feet were growing faster than her shoes were wearing out, she rallied her classmates to donate their gently used shoes. In two weeks, they delivered more than 100 pairs of shoes to a local service organization. ★

CLOTHES FOR KIDS

DIANA GAMBLE
Fergus High School
Lewiston, Montana
Diana created the Clothes for Kids program, which provides essential personal items for children in foster care. Working with the Department of Family Services (DFS) and AmeriCorps, Diana asked local merchants to contribute such items as diapers, blankets, sweats, toothbrushes, coloring books, and other items she stuffed in care bags for distribution to the foster children. ★

A-FAIR OF THE HEART

SHEMILLY BRISCOE
Pahrump Valley High School
Pahrump, Nevada
Shemilly organized the A-Fair of the Heart to support a local domestic crisis-intervention program and shelter. Shemilly, who taught a dance class for younger children, arranged a three-hour talent show and a raffle, which raised over $1,000 for the program and helped raise awareness about child and spousal abuse. ★

PARK AVENUE SYNAGOGUE FOOD PANTRY

ELIZABETH SCHEIER
Hunter College High School
New York, N.Y.
Elizabeth worked for five years with the Park Avenue Synagogue Food Pantry, which she directed. The teen-operated program provided food to homeless and indigent families in New York City. Elizabeth changed the program's eligibility requirements, researched and upgraded the nutritional contents of its food packets, and overhauled its filing system. ★

GRANDMA'S GIFTS

EMILY DOUGLAS
McCord Middle School
Worthington, Ohio
Emily started Grandma's Gifts in memory of her late grandmother. Emily ran the small organization to provide social service agencies in Appalachian Ohio, Kentucky, and West Virginia with clothing, books, and educational toys for needy children. Emily negotiated a donation-matching agreement with a local oil company and works with local news groups to promote her cause. ★

LEMON-AID

KATHERINE ELLER
Carver Middle School
Tulsa Oklahoma
Katherine started Lemon-Aid, a fundraiser for the Tulsa Day Center for the Homeless. She acquired supplies from donors, worked with local media to promote the program, and recruited kids all through the area to set up more than 200 Lemon-Aid stands. Lemon-Aid raised over $7,000 in 1994, and $20,000 in 1995, enabling the Center to purchase toys, playground equipment, cribs, and various emergency supplies. ★

HELP HUNGRY KIDS

CHARLES KAISER
Clatskanie High School
Clatskanie Oregon
Charles turned a statewide program, the Help Hungry Kids food bank, into a national campaign. Charles involved several business partners and national associations in the food bank and had 11 states participate this year. Charles says that next year all 50 states will participate, and he hopes to surpass the U.S. Postal Service's food collection record of 32 million pounds. ★

KIDS HELPING KIDS

GENEVA CAMPBELL
Philomath Middle School
Philomath, Oregon
Geneva started the Kids Helping Kids program in her school to raise money and perform service for local organizations serving the homeless. By baking and selling thousands of cookies, Kids Helping Kids raised $3,500, some of which was sent to Oklahoma City relief groups after the bombing there. Geneva has also spent a night sleeping outside in a cardboard box to feel first hand what it is like to be out on the street. ★

SEEING-EYE DOG

YOLANDA DECILLIS
Pocono Intermediate School
Swiftwater, Pennsylvania
Yolanda raised a seeing-eye dog for the 4-H Seeing-Eye Puppy Project. She trained, fed, and cared for her dog Pruitt for an entire year before turning him over to her Seeing Eye coordinator for final training. Yolanda involved her family with the program, but assumed major responsibility for her puppy. ★

PROVIDENCE COURT BUDDIES

MELISSA GILLOOLY
Pilgrim High School
Warwick, Rhode Island
Melissa started the Providence Court Buddies

"We all have the power to change the world; all we have to do is stand up."

MATTHEW COPUS

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summer tennis education program for inner-city youngsters. High school tennis players from surrounding suburbs provide free tennis lessons to children ages 8-12. The U.S. Tennis Association and local groups donate tennis racquets, balls, T-shirts, and lunches. Melissa's program is now a regular part of Providence's summer recreation program. ★

HOMELESS FAMILIES AT INTERIM HOUSE

ELISABETH CHARNLEY
Barrington Middle School
Barrington, Rhode Island
Elisabeth helped homeless families at Interim House in her community. Elisabeth organized a bake sale to raise money for various items the families needed and contacted local restaurants to obtain donated gift certificates. She and several classmates delivered food, toys, books, and clothing to the families, and tended the children while their parents attended a high school math class. ★

VOLUNTEER COACH

SARA JEWETT
Middlebury Union High School
Middlebury, Vermont
Sara worked with the mentally and physically handicapped as a volunteer coach to Special Olympics athletes and as a counselor at Silver Towers Camp, which also works with handicapped children. Sara works with handicapped individuals of all ages, teaching them soccer, floor hockey, basketball, cross-country skiing, and swimming. ★

BUY A BEAR TO SHOW YOU CARE

ZACHARY CARTER
Swanson Middle School
Arlington, Virginia
Zachary raised money for the Survivor's Educational Fund to help children affected by the bombing in Oklahoma, City. His program raised over $1,500 to assist the bombing victims. Zachary and his schoolmates sold small paper teddy bears to other students. The purchased bears were decorated and displayed in the school hallways. ★

NEEDED ITEMS DRIVE

ANN NELSON
Walker High School
Jasper, Alabama
Ann conducted a needed-items drive for Daybreak at a local center for abused women and their children. She spent over 50 hours creating flyers, setting up collection boxes in local stores, churches and businesses, and asking for donations door-to-door. After a month's work, truckloads of food, baby items, and other supplies were collected, along with $700 for prescription medications. ★

CLOTHING DRIVE

WILLIAM VAUGHAN
Whitesburg Middle School
Huntsville, Alabama
William organized a clothing drive for the homeless. He recruited 25 people to help him collect clothes by setting up collection sites, going door-to-door, and requesting donations from local businesses. William spent 100 hours on the project and amassed over 500 items. The clothes were distributed at a dinner for the homeless sponsored by the Inter-Faith Council of Churches. ★

CHILD INTERVENTION PROGRAM

NATASHA LIEBIG
Chugiak High School
Eagle River, Arizona
Natasha was active in Alaska's Intensive Early Intervention program for autistic children. Each volunteer focused on one family with an autistic child. Natasha helped a four-year-old overcome the challenges he faced in everyday life. Her involvement in the two-year program led to several of her friends becoming involved as well. ★

BUILDING HOMES

TIM MOORE
Acacia Middle School
Hemet, California
Tim helped build homes for three low-income families in his community. Working with Habitat for Humanity, Moore also volunteered for fundraisers, spoke at informational meetings, and made visits to local newspapers and radio stations to raise awareness of the construction project. He was the youngest member to be elected to the Board of Directors of the Hemet/San Jacinto Chapter of Habitat for Humanity, International. ★

TRICK OR TREAT SO OTHERS CAN EAT

DAWN STOCKWELL
Westminster High School
Westminster, Colorado
Dawn created Trick or Treat So Others Can Eat, a canned food drive for the Food Bank of the Rockies. As vice-president of her school's National Honor Society, she encouraged members to "trick or treat" for canned goods on the day before Halloween. The group collected over 250 cans for Colorado's hungry people. ★

CLOTHING AND TOY DRIVE

STEVEN COSTA
Thunder Ridge Middle School
Aurora, Colorado
Steven started a clothing and toy drive for the Aurora Interchurch Task Force, an organization that provides emergency assistance. He recruited more than 40 people from his community to help with the project, which took over 350 hours to complete. After five weeks, the drive had amassed over 3,600 pounds of clothing and toys, which were delivered to those in need. ★

GRANDMA RITA'S CHILDREN

GILLIAN KILBERG
Westminster School
Simsbury, Connecticut
Gillian used a $20,000 inheritance from her grandmother to found Grandma Rita's Children, a camp providing day trips for needy and abused children near her home in Virginia. Forty-seven children, mostly from a low-income housing project in Fairfax County, Va., visited 15 Washington, D.C.-based museums and attractions in the summer of 1996. Kilberg recruited over 70 people to chaperone the trips and raised more than $30,000 in donations for next year. ★

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VEGETABLE GARDEN

BRANDON MULCUNRY
Irving A. Robbins Middle School
Farmington, Connecticut
Brandon created a garden and harvested over 6,000 pounds of vegetables for St. Elizabeth House and Mercy Shelter in Hartford. He recruited more than 100 people to help plant, cultivate, harvest and deliver the produce, which was grown in a 50' x 100' garden plot in Farmington. Brandon and his volunteers have spent over 1,000 hours on the project, which was recognized in the New York Times and in local news media. ★

OUTREACH CENTER

GARY MCCORMICK
Carver Middle School
Monroe, Georgia
Gary helped start the Outreach Center, which feeds the homeless and hungry. He designed advertisements and contacted local businesses requesting furniture and monetary donations for the project, which was sponsored by his church. Once the center opened, he helped plan daily meals and served food to the hungry. Gary spends weekends working at the center. ★

ASSISTING THE DEAF

JOSHUA FRANK
Holy Family School
Danville, Illinois
Joshua established a fundraiser for St. Joseph's Institute for the Deaf. Aware that the Illinois Association of Junior High Student Councils annually raised money for a statewide cause, Joshua campaigned to become a district representative for the group and drew attention to his fundraising plan. ★

HAPPY HELPERS FOR THE HOMELESS

AMBER COFFMAN
The Severn School
Severna Park, Maryland
Amber directed and founded "Happy Helpers for the Homeless." Every Saturday, she and several volunteers made 600 bag lunches at her home, which they then distributed to the homeless, along with thousands of toiletries, blankets, clothing items and resource books. ★

SUMMER DAY CAMP

KATHARINE EWALL
Brookline High School
Brookline, Massachusetts
Katharine co-founded a summer day camp for children of a Sioux Indian Reservation in South Dakota to provide some stability for the small community. She and two friends raised $4,000 to fund the month-long program. They also organized and provided activities involving cooking, swimming, and arts and crafts from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. everyday. ★

SOUPER CAMPAIGN

EMILY PRYSBY
Berkshire Middle School
Birmingham, Michigan
Emily started a SOUPER campaign to feed the hungry. After making posters to advertise the event and daily announcements over the school intercom, she collected hundreds of pounds of soup and other food for distribution in the low-income Cass Corridor section of Detroit. ★

"I was lucky to have this opportunity to help so many people in need."

KELLY KESSLER

STORY-TIME ON THE ROAD

MEAGAN CORLIN
Strafford School
Strafford, New Hampshire
Meagan created a reading program called Story-time on the Road to share her love of books with others. She used her title as Miss New Hampshire America Pre-Teen to promote her program to day care centers, libraries, elderly housing facilities, and homeless shelters. Each week, she and several schoolmates traveled to these various locations to read stories to children or the elderly. ★

STARS

RACHEL SHARPE
Discovery Junior High School
Fargo, North Dakota
Rachel participated in a variety of volunteer activities. She worked at a camp for the handicapped and, as a member of Students Taking Action Responding With Service (STARS), helped raise money for a local food pantry. In addition, she spent many hours helping a refugee Somalian family learn to speak English and understand American culture. ★

SHARE THE SPIRIT

RYAN TANNER
Will Rogers Junior High School
Claremore, Oklahoma
Will started a fund-raising project with his family to contribute to a Share the Spirit Christmas drive. The drive, sponsored by his local newspaper, collected money to buy Christmas gifts for needy children. Ryan and his sister gathered mistletoe from trees to sell outside a nearby shopping mall, and each year donate money to the Christmas drive. ★

THE EVERGREEN CLOTHING CLOSET

MEGAN OSTREM
Evergreen Junior High School
Hillsboro, Oregon
Megan founded a clothing drive for the less fortu-

nate called The Evergreen Clothing Closet. She cleaned out a small room in her school to serve as the closet for her project, publicized her campaign throughout the school, and began collecting items. Many needy families and migrant workers in her community have benefited from the clothing drive, and its success made it necessary for Megan to look for larger quarters. ★

PROJECT RESCUE

VANESSA MILSOM
Saint John's School
San Juan, Peurto Rico
Vanessa headed the planning and construction of a home for Project Rescue, a local non-profit organization that provided a supportive family environment for neglected and abused boys. After hosting several fund-raising events and writing for donations, she personally collected $7,000 to purchase a house kit from a local construction company. Vanessa and several volunteers worked eight-hour days for a month to complete the construction. ★

HELPING HORTENSE VICTIMS

SOFIA BLAZEVIC
Baldwin School of Puerto Rico
Guaynabo, Puerto Rico
Sofia helped provide for victims of Hurricane Hortense in September 1996. Working with other members of her Catholic service group, Yaurel, collected medical supplies and clothing and distributed them to those in need. She filled two vans with supplies on the first day of the aftermath and continues to provide for those left homeless by the destruction. Sofia also cared for victims who were hurt or ill. ★

THE CAUSE ORGANIZATION

ANNE-CAMPBELL TURNER
D.W. Daniel High School
Central, South Carolina
Anne-Campbell organized The Cause Organization at her school after a Clemson University scholarship fund in memory of three of her classmates ran short of money. Her 130-member club raised $5,000 in a month's time with car washes, talent shows, bake sales and other fund-raising activities. Her club enabled the scholarship fund to continue, surpassing the amount needed by $2,000. ★

Y-NOT

ANNINA BURNS
George C. Marshall High School
Falls Church, Virginia
Annina founded "Y-NOT," a volunteer organization for teenagers to counter the unfavorable "Generation X" stereotype through service. Club members visit the Embry Rucker Shelter to befriend and tutor homeless children six hours a week. Y-NOT also sells calendars with pictures drawn by these children to fund the shelter. The 30-member club had become the largest at Annina's school. ★

BOOK DRIVE

MOHANA KUMAR
Mt. Ranier High School
Des Moines, Washington
Mohana started her own book drive nearly five years ago and has since distributed more than 9,000 books to underprivileged children in the Seattle area. She collected books from donation bins in local schools, sorted them by age and reading level, and distributed them through Headstart and other community programs. Mohana worked with the Federal Way Youth Commission, the National Honor Society, and area Key Clubs. ★

PEER COUNSELOR

RUTH KING
Mercer Christian Academy
Princeton, West Virginia
Ruth volunteers as a peer counselor at the Abel Crisis Pregnancy Center. She participated in a month-long training course to prepare for her position, and spent several hours each week talking with women who were experiencing an unplanned or unexpected pregnancy. She offered the women support and helped them plan for their futures. ★

SCAVENGER HUNT

KATIE RUDOFF
Monroe Middle School
Green River, Wyoming
Katie organized a Scavenger Hunt food drive for the less fortunate in her community. She gathered her friends, family members, and other town residents and formed several teams that competed against each other to collect as much food as possible. Almost 2,500 food items were collected after the first year's drive. ★

RUN FOR THE BOOKS

FRANK CYRA-KORSGAARD
West High School
Anchorage, Alaska
Frank organized a Run for the Books to provide reading materials for homeless teens at Covenant House Alaska. Over a four-month period, Frank worked with Covenant House, identified adult mentors, solicited sponsors such as the local Barnes & Noble bookstore, promoted the event, and organized logistics. Eighty-two people ran in the event, including the mayor of Anchorage, and another 40 contributed, resulting in donations of more than 200 books and $3,600. ★

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY CHAPTER

JUSTIN CARROLL
Arkansas School for Mathematics and Sciences
Wynne, Arkansas
Justin founded and now managed Arkansas' first high school chapter of Habitat for Humanity, a national organization that builds new homes for the needy. Justin's interest in this area began when his father died and his mother could not afford to own a home. When his mother was finally able to buy a home, Justin wanted to help others realize the same dream of home ownership. ★

A SPANISH-LANGUAGE GUIDE TO FREE OR LOW-COST HEALTH CARE SERVICES

ARIANE WILSON
Menlo-Atherton High School
Atherton, California

Ariane researched, wrote and distributed a Spanish-language guide to free or low-cost health care services for Hispanics in her area. A friendship with a family from Mexico, who would often ask Ariane about medical care, made her realize that her community had no comprehensive source of healthcare information available in Spanish, despite a large Hispanic population. With an interest in healthcare, the ability to speak Spanish and a love of volunteering, she set out to produce a convenient guide detailing medical and public health services available at clinics where Spanish is spoken and where the staff is knowledgeable about subsidized programs for immigrants. She collected information from clinics, agencies and organizations, translated it into Spanish, and printed her guide at a local print shop. ★

FREE THE CHILDREN

DIANNA ENGLISH
Windham High School
Willimantic, Connecticut

Dianna founded the Connecticut chapter of Free the Children, a non-profit youth organization dedicated to eliminating child labor and exploitation. Dianna studied the issue extensively, conducted regular meetings of chapter members, and worked to educate the news media about child labor. She has spoken in schools, community organizations and at numerous national conferences to raise public awareness of the issue, and has helped raise thousands of dollars for Free the Children programs. ★

HOLIDAY SHOPPING WITH THE DISADVANTAGED

DOMINIQUE WOMACK
Hugh M. Browne Junior High School
Washington, D.C.

Dominique planned and coordinated a holiday shopping trip to allow disadvantaged children in the community to buy gifts for others and for themselves. Dominique, who felt fortunate to have a family, love, and the finances to purchase items without concern, wanted to share her blessings by helping others during the Christmas season of giving. She enlisted the support of her student government association and the Ladies of Distinction Club to join her in this special project. Dominique approached the Downtown Jaycees for funding, recruited student chaperones to escort and advise the children, arranged for parents to volunteer their time to drive the children to and from stores, and contacted community groups and schools to identify children most in need. ★

EYE CAN READ

ANDREW ALLSHOUSE
Radford High School
Honolulu, Hawaii

Andrew created and presided over a massive effort to collect books and eyeglasses for the needy in this country and abroad. Andrew, afflicted with chronic sensory integration illness and hearing loss, was inspired to create Eye Can Read, through which he collected books and eyeglasses for homeless children in San Diego, Arizona, New Mexico and Mexico. He established more than 30 collection sites and organized special days at local museums for which entrance was a donation of books or eyeglasses. The success of the program led to many newspaper articles and requests for books from schools in Uganda and Eritrea. In response to the growing scope of his projects, Andrew created Priority Teens, a group of teen volunteers who assisted in conducting drives, hosting a monthly reading club, and performing puppet shows to encourage elementary students to read. ★

PERFORMANCES FOR HOSPITALS AND HOMELESS SHELTERS

AARON ROMERO
Moanalua Middle School
Honolulu, Hawaii

Aaron shared his love of reading with those who do not have books of their own. For a Boy Scout Eagle Project, he chose to dress up as the clown Sunshine and perform magic shows and clown acts at hospitals and homeless shelters. Aaron's mother, who is also a clown, inspired him to volunteer for the less fortunate in the community by joining her clown act. He learned juggling, balloon making, clown antics, and costuming. In addition to performing during the holiday season, Aaron put on shows at fund-raising events for the families of seriously ill children,and for the Institute for Human Services. ★

HELPING REFUGEES APPLY FOR U.S. CITIZENSHIP

COURTNEY WHITE
Eagle High School
Eagle, Idaho

Courtney is an aspiring language teacher who volunteered at the Mountain States Refugee Center where she taught English as a second language, assisted with fundraisers, and helped refugees apply for citizenship. In one instance, Courtney was assigned to teach English to a young Bosnian mother and her family in their home twice weekly. Rather than simply provide instruction, Courtney helped the young woman find a job, search for childcare, and arranged transportation needs. ★

FUNDRAISER FOR SPORTINGEQUIPMENT

MAX PENNING
Barrington Middle School-Prairie Campus
Barrington, Illinois

Max initiated a fund-raising project to purchase sporting equipment for an underprivileged school in Chicago. Max had heard that Holy Family Lutheran School provided a safe education environment for children from high-crime neighborhoods, but that the school could not afford sporting equipment. Max, a member of his school's basketball team, wanted to give these students a chance to play the game, so he encouraged his fellow teammates to join him in a fund-raising effort. He recruited more than 100 students to help sell 2,000 pizzas, raising $3,000 for balls, field hockey equipment, portable basketball hoops, bats, bases, jump ropes and other sports gear. The project was so successful that a local volunteer center agreed to sell pizzas and split the profits with Max so he could help meet another important need at Holy Family Lutheran School: musical instruments. ★

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AIDING THE DISADVANTAGED

WOMAN AND CHILD ADVOCATE AT THE HOMELESS SHELTER

SAMANTHA CROW
Topeka High School
Topeka, Kansas

Samantha established a children's library of more than 1,500 books and activities for the Battered Women Task Force (BWTF), an organization that provides secure housing for women and children who have been abused or are threatened by domestic violence. Samantha, a long-time volunteer at her local public library, wanted to do something for the BWTF children after learning that they are often bored and have few sources of entertainment as a result of their seclusion. She began building her library by hosting parties that required book donations for admission, and then launched book-collection drives through local organizations. In addition to organizing the library, Samantha spent several hours a week as a children's advocate at the shelter. ★

COLLECTING COATS AND EYEGLASSES

JAMIE LILES
Henderson County North Junior High School
Henderson, Kentucky

Jamie chaired a community campaign that collected 150 coats for the needy in her area and 20,000 pairs of eyeglasses for missionaries in the Caribbean. Jamie was motivated to do this project because she saw that many needy people in her own community were not able to provide warm winter coats for themselves and for their families. During the two-month drive, Jamie recruited volunteers from her Junior Optimist club, coordinated promotional activities, and worked continually to encourage donations. ★

HOME COOKED MEAL FOR THE SHELTER AND HOMELESS

ERIN CAMPBELL
Reeds Brook Middle School
Hampden, Maine

Erin prepared a home-cooked meal along with a friend and delivered it to a local shelter for homeless and troubled youth. Erin, who had helped conduct a clothing drive for the shelter in the past, had noticed on trip to the shelter that the shelter's kitchen did not have an oven. She was told that state regulations do not allow ovens in homes for troubled youth, and that the residents relied on the microwave, or on donations, for a hot meal. When Erin heard this, she decided that she could donate a hot meal. Erin and her friend bought supplies and ingredients, cooked the meal themselves, and delivered it to the shelter. ★

GIRLS RULE!

KRISTINE SCHMITZ
Academy of the Holy Cross
Kensington, Maryland

Kristine developed Girls Rule!, a program for at-risk girls in fourth and fifth grade that provides positive female role models and focuses on issues such as self-esteem, conflict resolution, and positive relationships. After working at the local community center one summer on a buddy program for children with behavior problems, Kristine approached the center's director and asked if there were any children who would benefit from more personal attention. The director and staff identified a number of fourth- and fifth-grade girls in need of mentoring and counseling due to family and personal issues that were affecting their behavior. To start Girls Rule! Kristine developed a curriculum, secured a location, scheduled meeting times, encouraged girls to participate and obtained permission from their parents. ★

YOUTH FIGHTING HUNGER

JEFFREY GUHIN
Creighton Preparatory School
Omaha, Nebraska

Jeffrey founded a nine-high-school organization dedicated to feeding the hungry each spring. After touring a food bank, Jeff learned that charities are overwhelmed with donations during the holiday season, but often receive relatively little support at other times of the year. He decided to form his own organization, Youth Fighting Hunger, to work on this problem. He solicited support from area businesses, recruited the Salvation Army as a sponsor, and began calling on local high schools and youth groups. Once established, his group conducted more than 20 fund-raisers and food drives, and persuaded a local supermarket chain and TV station to sponsor a Youth Fighting Hunger Day last spring. ★

KIDS FOR KIDS

MARC FREED-FINNEGAN
Montclair High School
Montclair, New Jersey

Marc created a program at his high school that arranges a wide variety of activities for children at a nearby homeless shelter. Marc, who was named a middle-level Spirit of Community State Honoree during the first year of this program for developing an online homework service for his classmates, was motivated by his experience at the award program's national recognition events. Upon returning to New Jersey, he began to think about helping homeless children and soon found a shelter in Newark to work with. He recruited a faculty advisor, drafted a constitution, named his program Kids for Kids, and set about developing interest among fellow students. His program, which now has more than 100 active student members, organizes trips to the shelter several times a month to entertain the children with games, stories, songs, art projects,and other activities. ★

A STAND AGAINST CHILD ABUSE

MATTHEW COPUS
Sandia High School
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Matthew volunteered at All Faiths Receiving Home, a home for abused and neglected children. He began by getting to know the children at the home and earning their trust. Soon, he started to coordinate art projects, games, and activities to encourage the children to communicate and regain social skills that had been damaged by abuse. Matt also recruited several other volunteers from school to help with the activities, and he raised money to help pay for the materials needed for the projects. In addition to spending time with the children, Matt wanted to increase awareness of the dangers of child abuse, so he began accepting speaking engagements around the community to spread the word and encourage others to take a stand against child abuse. ★

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CELEBRITY AUCTIONS FOR THE HOMELESS

LYNNEA MCELREATH
Pinecrest High School
Southern Pines, North Carolina
Lynnea planned an auction of items donated by celebrities to raise funds to start a homeless shelter in her community. Having volunteered at several shelters and soup kitchens with her church's youth group, Lynnea came to realize that her affluent community had a homeless problem. She joined a community group, comprised mostly of local business people, to study the needs of the homeless in their community. Lynnea said there were plenty of good ideas raised in the group, but no capital to put those ideas to work. That's when Lynnea came up with the idea to auction off celebrity throwaways. She wrote letters to more than 500 celebrities all over the world asking for donations of things they didn't want or need anymore. She originally hoped to receive as many as 25 positive responses, but ended up with more than 350 items. ★

MISSION VOLUNTEERING

SHANDA BORGEN
Larimore Junior High School
Niagara, North Dakota
Shanda volunteered up to 20 hours a week performing a wide variety of tasks at the Grand Forks Mission. Looking for a way to use some of her free time in a positive way, Shanda responded to a request for volunteers at the mission, and she was considered an integral part of the mission's operations. One of her main duties is to bake banana bread and cookies for the homeless. Using part of her allowance and donations from others to buy baking supplies, Shanda baked 628 loaves of banana bread with the help of her grandmother during her first year at the mission. She also built birdhouses, assisted with holiday events, raised several thousand dollars for mission expenses, and collected a broad range of needed items for the mission and its residents. ★

PROJECT REACH OUT

DUSTIN GOOD
Pottsgrove Intermediate School
Pottstown, Pennsylvania
Dustin played a lead role in Project Reach-Out, a school group comprised of students who want to make a difference in their community. As part of this effort, Dustin spent many hours attending planning meetings, promoting the group's activities to his school's student body, recruiting other volunteers, and working on special events, such as a prom for residents of a local nursing home and the adoption of a needy family in the community ★.

MI AMIGO

LINDSAY AMPER
Cranston High School West
Cranston, Rhode Island
Lindsay initiated Mi Amigo, an after-school program connecting high school mentors with at-risk elementary school students. The idea of presenting positive role models to younger children came to Lindsay after seeing a news report about a group of young boys who molested a young child. Lindsay approached the local elementary school principal to get his support for Mi Amigo, and then recruited 20 high school students to serve as mentors. To fund materials, snacks and field trips, Lindsay applied for and received a grant from the Y.E.S.! Foundation. She worked with the teen volunteers to develop activities promoting self-respect, courteous behavior, and schoolwork. As the program moved along, Lindsay noticed that the children's reading and social skills were improving, and that they were building meaningful relationships with positive role models. ★

"You grow personally and are rewarded by seeing the joy a little effort on your part brings to their lives."

LINDSEY ODOM

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PROJECT FOR THE DISABLED

KARI WISE
Central Middle School of Science
Anchorage, Alaska

Kari chose volunteering over summer basketball practice when she spent one month assisting residents of a low-income housing project for the disabled. Her time was spent visiting with the residents, performing office duties including computer work, and answering telephones. Kari compiled a collection of the residents' favorite recipes along with biographies on each person into a cookbook she hopes will educate others about the plight of the poor and disabled. ★

RELIEF FOR FLOOD VICTIMS

SARA STIEBEN
Preston Junior High
Fort Collins, Colorado

Sara was compelled to volunteer in any way she could during a tragic flood that devastated her hometown. A veteran volunteer with the town's Food Distribution Center and her local church, Sara knew that her hands were desperately needed when water ravaged Fort Collins. Sara helped residents pump water from their homes, salvage their belongings, and sort and deliver food and clothing donations. Day after day, Sara reported to various flood relief centers, offering her assistance in any way she could. ★

KID PACKS AND SCHOOL PACKS FOR CHILDREN

DAVID ADAMIEC
Westbrook Middle School
Westbrook, Connecticut

David prepared Kid Packs and School Packs for children who are separated from their families due to domestic violence, arrest or drug abuse. The packs are filled with clothes, toiletries, toys, and school supplies, and are often the only things these children have once they are placed in foster care. David, who watched and helped his mom do similar volunteer work for their church, has coordinated much of the project on his own. He spent many hours convincing local merchants and friends to make donations to the project, shops for and purchases the goods, sorts all the donated items for age appropriateness, bundles the packs, and makes the deliveries to the Department of Family and Children Services. David makes presentations in schools and churches to encourage other children to get involved in the project. ★

SPECIAL OLYMPICS

ALISON NOLT
Seaford Middle School
Seaford, Delaware

Alison drew inspiration from her mentally challenged uncle to participate with him on a Special Olympics unified bowling league and swim team. She spent her autumns at the bowling lanes and, in January, Alison dove into the swimming program, which culminates in June at the Summer Games. When Alison is not attending practice, coaching the athletes, or competing in unified events, she is helping to raise money to purchase new equipment, uniforms, and special sporting devices for those with handicaps. ★

SOUP KITCHEN VOLUNTEER

KYM WILLIAMS
Jefferson Jr. High School
Washington, D.C.

Kym started volunteering in a soup kitchen when she was only 10 years old. She gave up every other Saturday afternoon to help prepare and serve meals to the homeless, elderly, and hungry in her area. When Kym began her service, she realized that she was the only young person volunteering, so she recruited a few cousins who now volunteer with her and her grandmother. ★

BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

CELIA MERENDI
South Miami Middle School
Miami, Florida

Celia initiated a book drive to provide books to students who could not afford their own. Celia understood just how fortunate she was to have had a room full of books since she was five years old. So when her aunt, a school teacher in an underprivileged area, told her that hundreds of her students did not own books of their own, Celia wanted to help. To get her campaign off the ground, Celia approached the volunteer group in her father's company and distributed a book drive flyer to over 1,500 of its employees. More than 900 new children's books were donated, which Celia categorized by age, boxed, and delivered to the elementary school just in time for every student to take home one new book for summertime reading. ★

DAY-AWAY CAMP FOR CHILDREN OF THE FLOOD

CRAIG WHYTE
Snake River High School
Blackfoot, Indiana

Craig motivated fellow students to take an active role in a clean-up effort and in coordinating activities for children left homeless by a massive flood in June 1997. When 50 homes in his school district were left under flood waters for nearly a month, Craig organized 40 student volunteers to help clean and repair five of those homes. While in the midst of the project, Craig realized that the forgotten victims were the children, and he desperately wanted to help. He enlisted the support of his advisor, principal, school administrators, and the student council to create a Day-Away camp for children of the flood. Children came via rowboats and tractors to participate in bowling activities, games, and counseling sessions that Craig arranged with school officials, using donations he received from local merchants. ★

ADOPT-A-STUDENT MINISTRIES

WILLIAM SHURLEY
St. Frederick Catholic High School
Monroe, Louisiana

William founded Adopt-A-Student Ministries, a student-run organization which pairs religious schools with area churches to encourage congregants to sponsor elementary students who cannot afford their school fees. After reading an article about a Christmas giving tree that provided gifts for the needy, Will decided to modify the idea to benefit those children who were unable to pay school fees. He began by convincing his church to partner with his former elementary school. Administrators at the school then prepared anonymous sponsorship forms for each needy child and made them available during church services to interested congregants. From that first church/school pairing two years ago, which sponsored 17 students, the Adopt-A-Student Ministries has grown to four pairings and 100 students sponsored. ★

MEALS FOR THE HOMELESS

DANIELLE SHERWIN
Gardner Middle School
Gardner, Massachusetts
Danielle prepared meals and served them to the homeless and hungry at a local soup kitchen since she was 11. Her weekly visits to the soup kitchen began as a project through her religion class, and though it wasn't her idea, she made it happen. ★

TUTORING

JAMIE MCADOO
Elko High School
Elko, Nevada
Jamie tutored a young autistic boy for the past six years. Jamie met the boy in a church child care class at which she used to assist. Noticing that he needed extra attention that the busy class could not provide, Jamie offered to tutor him in her own home once each week. Jamie worked with the youngster on his communication skills and the alphabet, and used the computer and music to teach him how to express himself. Jamie aspires to be a special education teacher. ★

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

ANNA DEMARTINO
Howard T. Herber Middle School
Malverne, New York
Anna conducted a fund-raising campaign at her school to raise funds to purchase Christmas presents for a family affected by domestic violence. Once Anna decided that she wanted to help make Christmas special for needy children, she contacted a local coalition for domestic violence and was assigned a family for which to purchase gifts. She then approached her school principal and got permission to conduct a fund-raiser at the school, which produced $175. With the money, Anna purchased winter gloves, hats, toys, and stuffed animals. She wrapped them herself, and delivered them to the coalition. ★

SUITCASES FORKIDS

AUBYN BURNSIDE
St. Stephens Lutheran School
Hickory, North Carolina
Aubyn founded Suitcases For Kids, a project which encourages donations of suitcases to children in foster care. When she realized that these children had to put their belongings in trash bags when they move from one foster home to the next, Aubyn dedicated herself to ensuring that every child in foster care would have a suitcase of his or her own. By getting the word out through local newspapers and in her Girl Scouts and 4-H newsletter, she started small. The donations and the message grew, and soon Aubyn was speaking at statewide conferences on her program, and passing out starter kits for other groups to launch Suitcases for Kids in their areas. Because thousands of suitcases have been donated, Aubyn enlisted support from trucking companies to transport the excess to areas in need. ★

SOUP KITCHEN VOLUNTEER

KATHERINE GLOVER
The Pennfield School
Portsmouth, Rhode Island
Katherine volunteered with her entire family at a local soup kitchen twice a month. Katherine helped collect donated food, prepared and served meals, and cleaned up afterwards. She encouraged friends from her Sunday school class to volunteer as well. ★

KIDS ACCEPTING CHALLENGES TODAY

LAUREN LUCAS
Brookland-Cayce High School
Cayce, South Carolina
Lauren established Kids Accepting Challenges Today (Kids A.C.T.), a community service organization intended to provide flexible and varied projects for interested young people. Kids A.C.T. originated when Lauren, at the age of 11, performed in a show for abandoned and neglected children at a local shelter. Kids A.C.T. was created to serve as a resource for young volunteers, offering information about local organizations and individuals who need help raising money, caring for the sick and homeless, or comforting terminally ill children. Soon, many people in South Carolina and other states heard of Kids A.C.T. and wanted to get involved. Lauren wrote and distributed a newsletter and updated a website to keep members and potential members up-to-date on service projects. ★

COMMUNITY CLOTHING CLOSET

MEREDITH HODGES
Oak Ridge High School
Oak Ridge, Tennessee
Meredith wanted to help the needy children in her area who did not have shoes to wear to school, so she designed a clothing drive and created a Community Clothing Closet with the donations. She convinced her church to provide an unused classroom for the Community Clothing Closet, and secured donations of carpet and paint to renovate the room. Meredith promoted the clothing drive in the community and collected good, stylish, usable clothing, toys, and clothing racks on which to display

"Helping those who are less fortunate has helped her feel good about herself, and her only regret is that she doesn't have enough time to help more."

SHANDA BORGEN

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the clothes. The closet has helped over 100 needy families who could not afford to purchase clothes, and has expanded into a second room to provide clothing for adults as well as for children. ★

WARM BABY BLANKETS

ELIZABETH CABLE
Johnson County Middle School
Mountain City, Tennessee
Elizabeth initiated a program for which she sewed baby blankets and donated them to the county health department for distribution to needy families. Elizabeth's project began to materialize last winter when she saw a mother carrying a baby whose arms and legs were exposed to the extreme cold. Knowing how bitter the winters in the Appalachian Mountains can be, Elizabeth decided that warm baby blankets might help the many children whose parents could not afford warm clothes. She contacted a local factory for fabric donations and has single-handedly sewn 203 blankets, far surpassing her original goal of a dozen. ★

BROWN BAG LUNCH

EMILY TOBLER
Canyon View Junior High School
Orem, Utah
Emily prepared brown-bag lunches for the homeless and hungry through a local shelter. A service idea that started out as a Christmas time commitment expanded to a once-a-month project that Emily's family and friends are involved in as well. On the third Sunday of each month, they prepared 50 bag lunches and delivered them to the shelter for distribution to the community's neediest. ★

SELLING USED CLOTHES TO BUY TEXTBOOKS

JOHN BOLLHARDT
Mount Anthony Middle School
Bennington, Vermont
John coordinated a clothing drive to help purchase textbooks for his school. After writing an essay about recycling used clothing, John thought it would be a good idea to raise money for school books. He rallied his school principal and fellow classmates for support, arranged for a recycling company to purchase the used clothing, advertised the clothing drive, and mobilized volunteers to help collect the donations. ★

AFTERSHARE KIDS

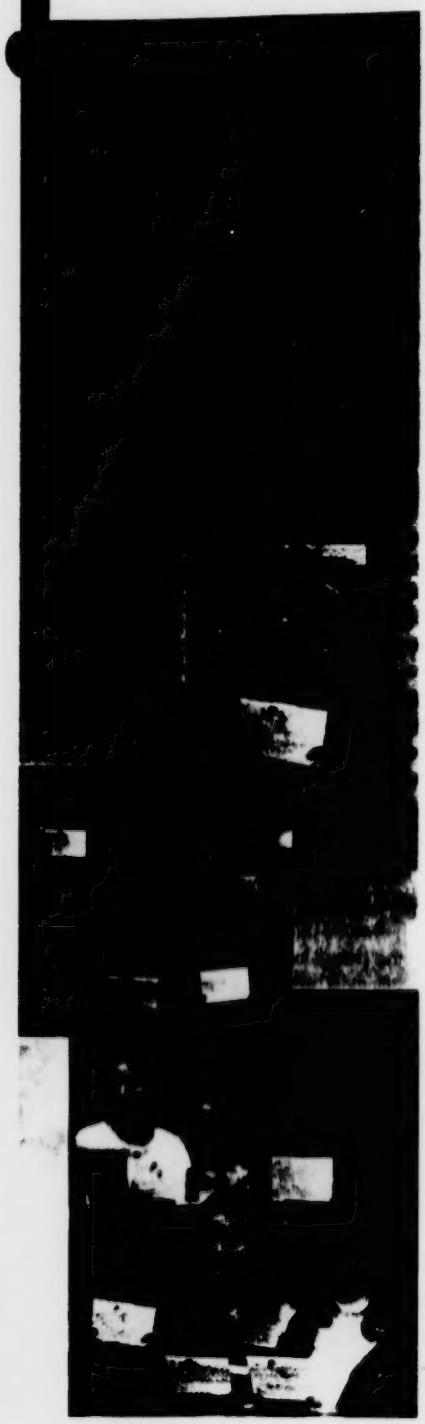
APRIL MATHEWS
Potomac Senior High School
Dumfries, Virginia
April provided homeless children with much-needed support from formerly homeless children, like herself, through a support group called AfterShare Kids. With the help of a friend whom she met during her stay at the Prince William County Homeless Prevention Center, April founded AfterShare Kids, a program that encourages kids to come back to the center to share advice with its young residents. April and other members of AfterShare Kids have received monetary awards for their volunteer efforts, which April donated back to the program to help purchase computers so the kids can write about their homeless experiences. The stories are compiled into a book to help educate the public on the plight of the homeless. ★

TOY & BOOK DRIVE FOR THE HOMELESS

DEV SENGUPTA
Kentridge High School
Kent, Washington
Dev designed and implemented a massive toy and book drive that yielded 5,000 items to benefit homeless children at two shelters in the Seattle area. For two years, Dev organized blanket drives to benefit the homeless, at which time he learned how young children suffer greatly as they move from shelter to shelter and are unable to take their favorite toys along. Determined to make a difference for these children, Dev took his toy drive campaign to his school advisor to enlist support. He then persuaded 19 other area schools to serve as donation drop-off sites, and then approached the community by sending press releases to local papers and placing public service announcements with area television stations. ★

"I just wanted to make a difference in someone's life and give him or her the true meaning of Christmas."

Helping the Sick and Disabled



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OUT OF UNIFORM

JAMI PEREZ
McGill-Toolen High School
Mobile Alabama
Jami started a fund-raising drive for a nine-year-old boy who needed surgery and could not afford it. Jami organized a walk-a-thon, an out-of-uniform, day at her school, and a collection campaign at a local fast-food restaurant. Her fund-raising activities raised over $5,000 for the young boy's operation and enlisted the support of students of all ages, parents, teachers, and the business community. ★

A CAMP FOR THE DISABLED

ANGELA ABRAMS
Parkview Arts/Science Magnet High School
Little Rock Arizona
Angela worked as a counselor for children with mental, physical, and developmental disabilities at Camp Aldersgate, a special camp for the disabled. Named the camp's 1995 Outstanding Youth Volunteer, she is involved year-round with the camp's Med Camps and Respite Care Program in addition to teaching camping, swimming, and other outdoor skills. ★

RAISING GUIDE DOG PUPPIES

MICHELLE BLANC
Redwood Valley Middle School
Redwood Valley, California
Michelle raised guide dog puppies for the blind. The puppies developed into caring companions that help the blind live more independent lives. Inspired by other 4-H guide dog raisers, Michelle has trained several guide pups for 14 to 18 months before sending them for advanced training in San Rafael. ★

RALLY FOR LIFE

SEAN MILLER
O'Leary Junior High School
Twin Falls, Idaho
Sean was nominated posthumously by his classmates for his work on behalf of the Rally for Life cancer walk in his community. Sean, a cancer patient himself, set out to raise $2,000 and ultimately raised $5,000. His goal was to fight cancer through means other than his own chemotherapy and raise awareness of the disease. Sean died in August 1995. ★

WALKER POCKETS

JAMES SMAGALA
Drake Middle School
Arvada, Colorado
James created a solution to a problem common to people who use walkers: walker pockets that hold personal items but leave hands free to lean on the walker. James obtained donated cloth, taught fellow Scouts how to sew the pouches, and even enlisted the help of senior citizen residents of the Mountain Vista Health center to cut patterns. ★

NURSING HOME VOLUNTEER

GINA CRON
Woodrow Wilson Middle School
Sioux City Iowa
Gina volunteered at a nursing home in her community. The youngest volunteer at the nursing home, Gina refilled supply carts, served meals, took patients for walks, kept the patients company, and helped with any activity she could. Gina volunteered three times a week for two hours and plans to volunteer at a community health center in addition. ★

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS WALK-A-THON

MELISSA SMITH
Presque Isle High School
Presque Isle, Maine
Melissa organized her area's first Multiple Sclerosis Walk-a-Thon, which raised over $2,000. Melissa collected donations from area businesses, promoted the Walk-a-Thon, and planned the actual event. She was the youngest coordinator in the state for both the 1994 and 1995 Walk-a-Thons. ★

LOVE BOX LIMITED

MEGAN LEAF
Fallston Middle School
Fallston Md.
Megan established Love Box Limited, a non-profit organization that has assembled and distributed some 30 gift bags per month for the last four years to pediatric patients at Johns Hopkins Children's Center. Love Box also raises money to buy the gift items, like coloring books, crayons, games, and stuffed bears. Megan switched from gift boxes to bags when she realized they were easier for the patients to take home. ★

HELPING THE SICK AND DISABLED

THE ALZHEIMER'S PATIENT

KIMBERLY SAVINO
Easton Junior High School
Easton Mass.
Kimberly helps Alzheimer's patients at a local nursing home. She helped feed the patients, spent time drawing them out and making them feel they were taken seriously, and helped with transportation and other activities. Kimberly also volunteered at a kennel and at her school. ★

RAISING MONEY FOR TRANSPLANT

AMANDA MULLINS
Long Beach Middle School
Miss.
Amanda rallied her school to raise money to pay for her cousin Erica's liver transplant. Amanda worked with her school council to organize bake sales, raffles, and other activities. Erica received the transplant, but her cancer had spread. When Erica died, Amanda and her classmates raised money for Erica's funeral. Since then Amanda has helped raise money for another child cancer victim's funeral. ★

TOY TRAIN

TRACI TAYLOR
Cape Girardeau Central Jr. High School
Cape Girardeau, Mo.
Traci established the Toy Train, which provided toys to children in Southeast Missouri Hospital. Traci, a cancer patient herself, knew first-hand how to make a kid's hospital stay a little easier. Working with her family and church, Traci built a cart and stocked it with toys for young patients. To raise funds, she spoke at local organizations and encourages donations. ★

GIRL'S GROUP

ERIN MITCHELL
Londonderry High School
Londonderry, N.H.
Erin created a Girl's Group, matching girls from her scouting troop with girls who have disabilities. They got together for theater trips, bowling, camping, and a variety of other activities. The program also gave the families of the disabled a chance to relax, knowing their daughters are safe and enjoying themselves. Erin founded the group after working with Special Olympics. ★

HOSTING ANNUAL CARNIVALS

ROBYN HYLE
Saint Ursula Academy
Cincinnati, Ohio
Robyn raised money for the American Cancer Society. Robyn, who lost an uncle and aunt to cancer, started hosting annual carnivals in her backyard in 1989, approaching local businesses for donations and enlisting the support of her peers. Robyn has turned over her carnival supplies and prizes to two area youngsters who intend to continue her program. ★

THE KELLEY CONNECTION

JAMES EDWARDS
Bishop Kelley High School
Tulsa Okla.
James organized The Kelley Connection for kids with cancer. James, himself a cancer patient, started the organization after discovering the loneliness and fear felt by young cancer patients. Through his program, high school students serve as big brothers or big sisters to young children with cancer. The volunteers were trained extensively by oncology social workers and hospital staff. ★

ELDERLY PATIENTS

DORIMAR MORALES
Colegio Maria Auxiliadora
Carolina, P.R.
Dorimar visited with elderly patients who had no families or visitors at her local hospital. She would pray with the patients, read to them, keep them company, and listen to their stories. Dorimar used half of her lunch money to buy rosary beads and other items for the hospital patients. She hopes to continue as a volunteer there and as a tutor. ★

VOLUNTEER AT A LOCAL NURSING HOME

AMY HIGHTOWER
Bambers-Ehrhardt High School
Bamberg, S.C.
Amy served as a volunteer at a local nursing home. Amy spent 4-8 hours a day on school days and 8-12 hours a day on weekends helping residents exercise, bathe, enjoy various recreational activities, and overcome their sadness at having had to leave their families and homes. ★

KEEPING COMPANY AT THE NURSING HOME

LAQUISHA PAYNE
Kingsbury High School
Memphis, Tenn.
Laquisha regularly visited a local nursing home. Despite her own developmental disability and visual impairment, Laquisha spent time there playing games, keeping them company, serving as their arms and legs, and knowing she has made a difference in their lives. Laquisha went on trips with the elderly residents, who were eager to share their expertise with Laquisha. ★

OPERATION SMILE'S HAPPY CLUB

MARGARET LYNCH
Nansemond-Suffolk Academy
Suffolk, Va.
Margaret worked with Operation Smile's Happy Club, which provided reconstructive surgery for third-world children who suffer from facial and other deformities. Margaret traveled to the Philippines with a team from Operation Smile. She occupied the children in pre-op and taught Filipino children about dental hygiene, nutrition, and rehydration therapy. ★

LICENSED VOLUNTEER

TIMOTHY DYGON
Tongue River Middle School
Ranchester, Wyo.
Timothy became a volunteer Certified Nursing Assistant (CAN) after helping out at Westview Nursing Home, where his mother is a nurse. Timothy wanted to handle more responsibility. He took the CNA class with special permission from the facility's Director of Nursing, scoring a 97 out of 100 on the final test. Although he was only 11 years old at the time, the state granted him a license. He volunteered at Westview on the weekends and in the summer. ★

HELPING THE SICK AND DISABLED

DISABILITY BOWLING

MATTHEW MCDANIEL
Junior High School
Caldwell, Idaho
Matthew more than 45 hours helping mentally and physically disabled people bowl. Every Monday for six months, he went to a nearby bowling alley to assist a group of 13- to 75-year-olds in any way he could. Matthew earned a Disability Awareness merit badge from Boy Scouts for his work with the bowling program. ★

CAMP VOLUNTEER

HEIDI DZIALAK
Navarre Middle School
South Bend, Ind.
Heidi volunteered as a counselor at Camp Millhouse, a camp for children and adults with physical and mental disabilities. She spent her entire summer vacation at the camp, helping to feed the campers, push wheelchairs, clean cabins, wash laundry, and perform other duties as needed. ★

AIDS AWARENESS

JAMIE MORALES
Jardine-Edison Junior Academy
Wichita, Kan.
Jamie lost her godfather, uncle, and mother to AIDS, and had a father who was living with the disease. To fight back, Morales gives educational presentations to other students and community groups on preventing HIV and AIDS. She has spoken to more than a thousand people and planned to videotape her program for the AIDS Fund. ★

RAISING MONEY FOR A CAUSE

RANDI SCHAMERHORN
Leesville Junior High School
Leesville, La.
Randi helped promote and organize the Vernon Parish Cystic Fibrosis Skate-A-Long. The activity involved more than 400 community members raising money for Cystic Fibrosis research. As a Cystic Fibrosis sufferer, Schamerhorn spoke of her illness at local schools to encourage students to support the event. The annual event raised over $5,000 for the National Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. ★

THE BOSTON INN

MICHAEL ROGOVIN
Sharon Middle School
Sharon, Mass.
Michael volunteered at The Family Inn, a place for Boston-area patients to stay with their families while awaiting transplant surgeries. During his nine months of service, he re-stocked kitchen, bathroom, and bedroom supplies, and tried to keep the visitors entertained with movies and conversation. Michael once had surgery to remove a malignant brain tumor, so he wanted to help others who were undergoing major operations. ★

THE JEFF PETTIT MEMORIAL CARNIVAL

JONATHAN SNYDER
Grand Blanc High School
Grand Blanc, Mich.
Jonathan organized and operated a community carnival that has raised more than $13,000 over the past nine years to benefit leukemia patients at Hurley Hospital's Pediatric Oncology Unit. His event was called the Annual Jeff Pettit Memorial Carnival, in memory of a family friend who died of cancer. ★

HATS ON FOR KIDS WITH CANCER

LINDSEY KOCIELA
Parkway West Middle School
Chesterfield, Mo.
Lindsey organized a fund-raising drive called Hats On For Kids With Cancer after a classmate was afflicted with the disease. By selling stickers to be placed on donors' hats on a specially designated day, Lindsey's annual drive raised more than $11,500 over two years for Friends of Kids with Cancer, a charity serving the St. Louis area. ★

HELPING THE PARENTS OF AN AIDS PATIENT

KEILA DAVIS
C.R. Anderson Middle School
Helena, Mont.
Keila provided care for a 2-year-old boy with AIDS. She babysat every other weekend to help the child's mother, who was also an AIDS patient, get some much-needed rest. Keila's mother helped her administer the child's daily medicine and other special requirements for his illness. She volunteered her time for the child she calls her little brother since March of 1996. ★

OPERATION--GOOD VIBRATIONS

CHRISTOPHER WALKER
Green Valley High School
Henderson, Nev.
Christopher developed a sound system that provides music and voice stimulation to newborns with complications. After months of extensive research and with a doctor's guidance, he sent a complete proposal for the system, called Operation: Good Vibrations, to companies that produce neonatal isolettes (incubators). He received positive feedback from one of the manufacturers. ★

ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES FOR THE CHALLENGED

JANA BURLESON
Walter Johnson Junior High
Las Vegas, Nev.
Jana participated in a service club activity to help mentally and physically challenged students through athletic activities. She visited the Variety School on several occasions and played soccer, basketball, bowling, and softball with the students. ★

ASSISTING BOTH THE YOUNG AND OLD

LEIGH-ANNE MANGONE
Thomas O. Hopkins Middle School
Burlington Twp. N.J.
Leigh-Anne comforted and cared for the elderly and organized special holiday events for handicapped youth in her community. At a local nursing home, she combed hair, tied shoes, and helped the residents get to their social activities and medical appointments. And through the Elks Club, she held Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter and Halloween celebrations for 87 handicapped youth. Leigh-Anne continued to work with both groups. ★

HELPING THE SICK AND DISABLED

BONE MARROW DRIVE

KATHRYN PHILLIPS
Rome Free Academy
Rome, N.Y.
Kathryn started a marrow drive for the National Bone Marrow Registry. She recruited nearly 200 people in her community to become bone marrow donors, and raised over $4,000 to pay for the necessary blood tests by holding a raffle, collecting donations door to door, and asking local businesses for contributions. ★

AIDS AWARENESS

JENNIFER KOEPPEL
Amherst Middle School
Amherst, N.Y.
Jennifer chaired an AIDS awareness committee at her school, which collected money and gifts for the Benedict House, a home for people living with AIDS. Under her leadership, the committee grew from five to 15 students. Koeppel's committee organized a Wellness Walk, a bake sale, and a popcorn sale to raise money for the home. ★

CELEBRITY AUCTION

JOSHUA WENTZ
Belpre Junior High
Belpre, Ohio
Joshua discovered that his best friend had cancer and was facing financial difficulties, so he organized a celebrity auction and raffle. Working with local media and service clubs in his community, he obtained donated items from celebrities and area businesses for his auction which raised over a thousand dollars for his friend. Wentz sent 250 letters, made signs and banners, collected more than 100 donated items, and persuaded the mayor of his town to speak at the auction. ★

SPECIAL OLYMPICS

DANIEL HARRIS
Upper Dublin High School
Fort Washington, Pa.
Daniel volunteered for the Special Olympics. He is a state certified Special Olympics coach in athletics and a member of the Special Olympics Sectional Softball Management Team, which coordinated the softball tournament for the greater Philadelphia area. He spent Sundays during the past four years coaching and motivating Special Olympics athletes. ★

LIVE-IN CARE GIVER

KELLY COX
Heritage High School
Maryville, Tenn.
Kelly served as a live-in care giver to an elderly woman during the past three summers. She lived with the woman, who could not afford to pay for live-in help, and cooked and cleaned, helping her bathe and dress, and aiding her throughout her daily routine. Kelly provided companionship to her elderly friend throughout the school year as well. ★

HELPING SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS

EMMA CERMAK
John Trotwood Moore Middle School
Nashville, Tenn.
Emma dedicated a major portion of her free time to helping mentally and physically disabled students. During the school year, she spent three hours a week helping a class of special needs students at the Harris-Hillman School, and over the summer her commitment expanded to 30 hours a week. She helped the disabled children eat, rubbed their backs to calm them, and helped them sit upright to watch movies. ★

KAPS FOR KIDS WITH CANCER

KATHY BECK
Lamesa High School
Lamesa, Texas
Kathy founded a program called Kaps for Kids with Cancer, which decorated and distributed caps to cancer patients who lost hair from treatments. She received donations to buy supplies for the project and recruited more than 175 people to help make the caps. Her program provided hats for over 400 children with cancer. ★

HORSEBACK RIDING FOR CHILDREN

CAITLIN JANUS
Barre Town Elementary School
Barre, Vt.
Caitlin organized a horseback riding program for handicapped children. She researched therapeutic riding by calling instructors throughout the country, then planned her program and made a training video on horsemanship for the participants to watch. Throughout the summer, she worked with an instructor to offer two-day sessions. ★

MEDICAL VOLUNTEER

SHAWN SHURM
John Rolfe Middle School
Richmond, Va.
Shawn volunteered in three different departments at the Medical College of Virginia Hospitals. He helped feed patients, make beds, and take vital signs in the neurosurgery department. He also filled prescriptions, assisted patients in the pharmacy, and assisted with mail, telephones, and computers in the administrative offices. ★

STATEWIDE BALLOON LAUNCH

JENNIFER KRASCHNEWSKI
Burlington High School
Burlington, Wisc.
Jennifer organized a statewide balloon launch as a 4-H activity and fund-raising event for the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Wisconsin. Through her efforts, sponsors were found for 950 balloons. She and her family filled the balloons with slips of paper stating the purpose for launching the balloon and the name of the balloon's sponsor. More than 100 people attended the launch, which raised $1,525 for the Make-A-Wish Foundation. ★

ANYONE CAN PLAY SOFTBALL

KRISTEN DEATON
Putnam City High School
Oklahoma City, Okla.
Kristen founded a softball league for children with special needs. She developed the idea Anyone Can Softball with her mother, a pediatric physical therapist. Following a year of planning, the first season began in the spring of 1996 with over 70 players and 60 assistants to the players, called buddies. After getting national coverage in USA Softball magazine, Deaton responded to inquiries from other states about starting similar programs. ★

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GOWNS FOR PREMATURE INFANTS

LESLIE COGGINS
Phoenix City Middle School
Phoenix City, Ala.

Leslie initiated a project to make burial gowns for the families of premature infants in an effort to ease the families' pain. Leslie secured fabric donations, cut out patterns and, since she never learned to sew herself, mobilized fellow students, relatives, and interested adults to help sew the burial gowns. The gowns were then delivered to local hospitals where nurses provide them to grieving parents. ★

VOLUNTEER FOR MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

ELIZA ROBINSON
Chaparral High School
Scottsdale, Ariz.

Eliza served as the spokesperson for the Desert Southwest Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society after having volunteered for the organization for many years. Inspired by her mother, who has lived with multiple sclerosis since Eliza was an infant, Eliza addressed hundreds of people in her effort to educate others about the struggles and challenges of living with this chronic disease. Eliza's personal appearances, which were intended to motivate people to either volunteer for the Multiple Sclerosis Society or to donate funds, dealt with the theme, Multiple Sclerosis Through the Eyes of a Child. Her reign as spokesperson culminated in a speech before 600 people at the annual Dinner of Champions, which raised over $270,000 for the society. ★

KIDS CONNECTED

JON WAGNER-HOLTZ
Mission Viejo High School
Mission Viejo, Calif.

Jon founded Kids Konnected, a non-profit organization that provides friendship, education, understanding, and support for kids who have a parent with cancer. Jon established the organization when he was only 11 years old and desperately searched for support to cope with his mother's cancer diagnosis. Jon created his own support group. Jon secured his first grant in 1993 that funded a 24-hour hot line which he operated from his home. Regular support groups grew from the success of the hot line, and by 1997, Jon incorporated Kids Konnected as a non-profit organization with 18 chapters in 12 states. Jon raised over $400,000 to support the free programs offered by Kids Konnected, which include a summer camp, an Internet website, youth leadership training, grief workshops, and other cancer related services. ★

MONEY FOR FAMILIES EXPERIENCING CANCER

RICHARD HIATT
McAuliffe Middle School
Los Alamitos, Calif.

Richard planned an Eagle Scout project to raise money for families experiencing cancer. Just two days after he chose his project, Richie's sister was diagnosed with leukemia. Richie mobilized his Boy Scout Troop, the Boy Scout Council, and the local chapter of Parents Against Cancer to support a walk-a-thon at the area high school. Richie handled publicity for the event, encouraged local businesses and individuals to pledge money or collect donations and walk, and coordinated the logistics. His initial goal of $1,000 was surpassed when he collected nearly $15,000, which Richie then donated to the Children's Cancer Center at the Long Beach Memorial Medical Center. ★

CHAPTER VOLUNTEER

BROOKE LYONS
Hopkins School in New Haven, Conn.

Brooke founded and presided over the Scoliosis Association of Connecticut, a support and information network for individuals with scoliosis and their families. At the age of 14, after years of studying ballet, Brooke was diagnosed with scoliosis and had to wear a body brace for 18 hours each day to improve her condition. Her search for information and support led only to frustration when she realized that the closest support group was located many miles away on Long Island, New York. Brooke, determined to make the path easier for others than it was for her, worked with the National Scoliosis Association to develop a Connecticut chapter which now includes 100 members. Brooke scheduled meetings, secured guest speakers, reached out to the community, handled media relations, educated school nurses on the importance of scoliosis screenings, raised funds, and staffed a toll-free support hot line that she created. ★

CONCESSION FOR MAKE A WISH FOUNDATION

COURTLAND KERSTETTER
Lake Forest High School
Felton, Del.

Courtland organized a food-vending service at Single A ballparks to support the Make-A-Wish Foundation. The campaign, which just completed its second year, was an idea Courtland came up with after reading an article in Baseball Weekly. With help from his school advisor, Courtland convinced the general manager of the Wilmington Blue Rocks to allow Courtland to sell soda, hot dogs, and popcorn at games to benefit terminally ill children. Courtland recruited six fellow students who now travel with him to additional ball parks in Delaware, Virginia, Maryland, and North Carolina. In the two years that Courtland has been selling his wares, he has raised $7,000 to fund six wishes through the Make-A-Wish-Foundation. ★

TEENS WITH CHRON'S DISEASE WEBSITE

MATTHEW GREEN
Titusville High School
Titusville, Fla.

Matthew conceived and created a website offering information and advice for teens, like him, who suffer from Chron's Disease. A Chron's flare-up once kept Matthew home from school for several weeks, at which time he turned to the Internet to find support. When his search turned up nothing, Matthew decided to take matters into his own hands. He learned how to build a website called Teens with Chron's Disease, which he filled with recipes, information, a message board, and a chat room. Matthew recorded over 13,000 visits to Teens with Chron's Disease, which he updated weekly with new recipes, experiences, and advice. In the meantime, Matthew overcame his fear of discussing his illness with other people. ★

LAP BLANKETS FOR RESIDENTS OF THE NURSING HOME

ERIN ENO
Iao Intermediate School
Wailuku, Hawaii

Erin spent her summer days sewing lap blankets and wheelchair bags for the residents of a local nursing home. When her great grandmother recov-

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ered from an illness and was discharged from a nursing home, Erin was encouraged to help other nursing home patients. She was told that she was too young to volunteer, so she decided to do something from her own home that could benefit the patients. Erin approached the nursing home director about homemade lap blankets and was told that such a donation would be greatly appreciated. Erin solicited fabric donations from a local factory and sewed 17 lap blankets and 11 wheelchair bags before the summer was over. Her donations were used as Bingo prizes for nursing home patients. ★

HIV AND AIDS PATIENT VOLUNTEERS

ALEXIA ABERNATHY
George Washington High School
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Alexia volunteered as a board member, coordinated fundraisers, handled chores, and befriended the residents of the Clare House, a home for HIV and AIDS patients. Alexia's first introduction to this dreaded illness came when she applied for and was accepted to the HIV/AIDS Education Board at her school, for which she was trained as an educator. She decided she needed to know more about people living with this illness when she heard about the Clare House and offered her help. For nearly 10 hours each week, Alexia helped the residents cook, clean, and garden, and often just sat and talked with them. As secretary of the board, Alexia attended meetings, took minutes, and directed all fund-raising events for the house, which is in deep financial need and under threat of closing. She initiated a letter-writing campaign to area doctors to solicit funds. ★

OPERATION LIFT OFF

CARL LANGLEY
Fort Fairfield Middle/High School
Fort Fairfield, Maine

Carl mobilized his town to support him in a campaign that raised $6,100 for Operation Lift Off, an organization which makes wishes come true for children with cancer. Two years ago, Carl received a wish from Operation Lift Off while he was recovering from his own bout with cancer. Since then, he has been motivated to help other sick children who have had a similar experience. Though he was hospitalized for two months during his fund-raising campaign for complications from his illness, Carl convinced his friends, family and fellow citizens to knock on doors and host bake sales to support his goal. Carl, who nearly doubled his initial goal of $3,500, hoped that other young people would learn from his actions that it is better to give than to receive. Carl passed away in January of 1998. ★

HOSPITAL VOLUNTEER

ERIN CARNEY
the Institute of Notre Dame
Baltimore, Md.

Erin volunteered for the past three years in a unique summer student program offered through the Child Life Department at Johns Hopkins Children's Hospital in Baltimore. An announcement made at her school urging students to volunteer at the hospital motivated Erin to apply for the program. Her summers over the past three years have been spent comforting young patients, keeping them company, playing games with them, and just holding hands. In her third summer, Erin was assigned to the Oncology Unit, where she spent her days attempting to soothe the pain of children suffering from cancer, and their parents. Erin plans to take her desire to help people, especially children, and apply it toward a career in pediatric nursing. ★

VISITING LOCAL NURSING HOMES

ERIN MICHAELSON
Battle Creek Middle School
St. Paul, Minn.

Erin visited with the residents of a local nursing home. In addition, Erin also assists disabled students at her school by helping with school assignments and craft projects. Other volunteer projects in which Erin has participated include collecting food for a local shelter, handling household chores for elderly shut-ins, and volunteering at her church. ★

MONEY FOR ALZHEIMER'S RESEARCH

KRISTEN ANDERSEN
Ladue Horton Watkins High School
St. Louis, Mo.

Kristen planned, coordinated and implemented an annual celebrity softball game to benefit Alzheimer's Disease research at the St. Louis University Brain Bank. Kristen's grandfather died from complications of Alzheimer's. Kristen was left with the painful belief that her grandfather died not knowing who she was. Attempts to ease her grief led her to St. Louis University, where group discussions on Alzheimer's culminated in the idea of a celebrity softball game to benefit research. From making the initial contact with the St. Louis Blues hockey team, to securing the participation of local celebrities and obtaining major donations of food, merchandise and equipment, Kristen took this idea and helped it grow into one of the Brain Bank's most successful fundraisers. Kristen coordinated the event for six years, raising over $100,000 to fund Alzheimer's research and educating over 20,000 people about the disease. ★

NURSING HOME VISITS

ASHLEY KEENE
Tipton Junior High
Tipton, Mo.

Ashley turned a trip to the nursing home where her grandmother worked into a regular series of visits intended to cheer and comfort the residents. Ashley read to the residents, played games with them, sung to them, polished the female residents' nails, served meals, and just sat and talked with those who have no one else. ★

ABILITY VERSUS DISABILITY

JOHN ORTMAN
C.R. Anderson Middle School
Helena, Mont.

John befriended a fellow classmate who suffers from cerebral palsy and has since made every effort to learn how to communicate with the disabled and to ease the fears of other classmates. John's relationship with Sierra, a wheelchair-bound eighth-grade girl who could speak only with a computer's aid, began when he sat next to her in class one day. Sierra encouraged John to learn more about the disabled by joining a group that teaches kids to understand disabled people. John learned how to speak with Sierra, introduced her to many of his fellow classmates, and helped to redefine ability and disability in his school. ★

NURSING HOME VISITS

ERIKA JOHNSON
Bayard Junior High School
Bayard, Nebr.

Erika spent the past several years visiting and volunteering at a local nursing home. Living across the street from the nursing home made it easy to drop

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by and visit the residents. The activities director allowed Erika to plan special activities for the residents and accompany them on walks. A great deal of her free time on weekends, holidays and in the summer was spent comforting and caring for the residents, whom she considers to be like grandmothers and grandfathers to her. ★

CANCER VIDEO

BRETT NEWTON
Long Valley Middle School
Long Valley, N.J.
Brett overcame a bout with cancer and, inspired by his experience, decided to help other children by performing in an educational video produced by Overlook Hospital. Brett, who had performed in community theatre before becoming ill, was quick to volunteer when the hospital approached him about the video. He also performed in a benefit show that raised $700,000 for the Hole In the Wall Camp, which Brett attended with other children diagnosed with cancer. ★

TERRY FOX RUN--CANCER RESEARCH

BRENDAN MAAS
Santa Fe High School
Santa Fe, N.M.
Brendan helped organize the Terry Fox Run to benefit cancer research and facilities in Santa Fe and served as co-chaired for the event. Brendan's family was touched by the story of Terry Fox, a man who ran across Canada after losing a leg to cancer. Just before he died, Fox asked Brendan's brother to continue the run, and it has been a pledge the Maas family has fulfilled since Brendan was just a baby. Brendan collected $8,000 in personal pledges for the 12 events, in which he ran, secured donations, and implemented event plans. Over $175,000 has been raised and distributed to The American Cancer Society and to St. Vincent Hospital in Santa Fe for the construction of its new cancer wing. ★

NURSING HOME VISITS

DANIEL CARLSON
Erik Ramstad Middle School
Minot, N.D.
Daniel volunteered at an area nursing home and hospital during his summer break. Danny visited with the residents of the Trinity Nursing Home twice each week. Danny talked with them, took them to and from physical therapy sessions, and accompanied them on picnics. He also worked at the main information desk and helped the staff by answering telephones and assisting callers. ★

FUNDRAISING FOR BONE MARROW TRANSPLANT

COLIN EGBERT
Westerville North High School
Westerville, Ohio
Colin saw a poster of a 6-year-old girl in need of a bone marrow transplant and turned his sympathy for her into a campaign to raise funds to offset the costs of finding a matching donor. Noelle was suffering from leukemia, and a bone marrow transplant was her only hope for survival. He approached his student council about initiating various fundraisers, which Colin coordinated to benefit the search for a donor. Success at his school led Colin to link with seven other area high schools that also approved fund-raising activities for Noelle. The money raised paid for bone marrow blood tests on 161 people to determine if a match existed for Noelle or for any other person on the National Bone Marrow Registry. ★

INFANT CRISIS CENTER

ASHLEIGH ROWSAM
Kenneth Cooper Middle School
Oklahoma City, Okla.
Ashleigh turned her summer break into a volunteering opportunity at the Infant Crisis Center. Ashleigh was selected from a group of interested teens to volunteer at the center and perform duties that ranged from simple office work to helping young children. During her service, Ashleigh assisted teen mothers her own age with basic needs like food and clothing. ★

KELLY'S BOOKS FOR BEDSIDES

KELLY SHELINSKY
St. Hubert Catholic High School
Philadelphia, Pa.
Kelly founded Kelly's Books for Bedsides, a campaign to collect new and gently used children's books which are then donated to the local hospital. Kelly believed in the power of books to energize the imagination. After spending many nights in Children's Hospital recovering from a chronic illness, Kelly realized that the children's playroom had many toys and games, but only a handful of books. So, Kelly began to solicit donations through local newspapers, church bulletins, and word-of-mouth, and collected more than 3,700 books. Thanks to Kelly's efforts, Children's Hospital initiated a program called Reach Out and Read, for which books are being placed in the homes of families who have none. ★

OPERATION CHEER-UP

TABITHA KULISH
Centerville Middle School
Lancaster, Pa.
Tabitha established Operation Cheer Up, an organization that makes homemade greeting cards and distributes them to nursing home patients, shut-ins, U.S. military personnel in Bosnia, and others in need of cheering up. The project grew from Tabitha's volunteer experience at a local nursing home. She realized that many residents received no visitors or mail, so she made greeting cards and gave them to those who had none. She has recruited many of her friends to help, and has convinced area businesses to donate supplies. ★

PRESCHOOL VOLUNTEER

DAWN HOFFSTETTER
Lakeside Middle School
Anderson, S.C.
Dawn inspired by a relative's disability, volunteered with a pre-school for disabled children. She spent part of her summer break assisting the teachers with various activities. Dawn, who had to learn sign language to communicate with many of the children, learned that a disability does not keep a child from playing or learning. ★

HELPING VISUALLY IMPAIRED CHILDREN

AARON SHAFFER
Pleasant Grove Middle School
Texarkana, Texas
Aaron coordinated a fishing tournament for visually impaired children in conjunction with a parents' workshop sponsored by the Texas Commission for the Blind. Aaron heard that many parents of visually impaired children could not attend this important educational workshop because they did not have anyone to care for their children. A fishing tournament was an idea that stemmed from

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Aaron's Boy Scout experiences, and was an activity he knew blind children did not usually get an opportunity to enjoy. He worked with the commission, and his Boy Scout troop to solicit donations for snacks and prizes, and to arrange transportation of the children from the hotel to the park where the tournament was held. Aaron recruited 21 volunteers so that each child had a partner. ★

STUFFED ANIMALS FOR DISPLACED CHILDREN

ANGELA BUDGE
Orem High School
Orem, Utah
Angela persuaded a group of high school students to make stuffed animals and donate them to fire and rescue squads, who could then give the toys to children who were displaced from their homes due to accident, fire, or abuse. The idea for the project stemmed from one that took place many years earlier when Angie's sister made the stuffed animals for children being taken to shelters. When Angie learned that the initial supply had dwindled, she decided to reinvent the project and get the Orem High School chapter of FHA/HERO involved. Angie collected material donations, cut and painted 100 faces, and prepared bows and designed patterns for the student volunteers to use when cutting fabric and sewing the stuffed animals together. ★

SPECIAL OLYMPICS

JENNIFER LABERGE
Middlebury Union High School
Middlebury, Vt.
Jennifer inspired by her mentally retarded sister, volunteered as head coach for a Special Olympics swim team. She dedicated hours, and gave every Saturday morning for seven years during the spring season to practicing with the athletes and working with them on their swimming skills. Jen also volunteered with other Special Olympics sports including bowling and soccer, and recruited many of her friends to join the program as well. ★

BONE MARROW DONORS ADDED TO THE NATIONAL REGISTRY

LAURA SHLESINGER
Saint Rita School
Alexandria, Va.
Laura raised the necessary funds and coordinated a bone marrow donor drive in her community to encourage awareness of the need for minority bone marrow donors. Laura's uncle, who was diagnosed with leukemia, was told that a bone marrow transplant was his only hope. While researching the illness, Laura realized that minorities in need of bone marrow transplants have little chance of finding a match since a very small percentage of minorities register with the National Bone Marrow Registry. Laura decided that a bone marrow donor drive held at an area church with a large Hispanic population might improve the chances for these people. She held yard sales, sold plants, and held a raffle to raise over $1,000 to support the marrow testing, and she secured a matching grant from the National Institutes of Health to supplement her initial donations. ★

HOSPITAL VOLUNTEER

SELENA NUUTINEN
Tomah Middle School
Tomah, Wisc.
Selena spent her summer break volunteering at a local Veterans Hospital. Her interest in volunteering originated with a class trip to the hospital during which she and fellow students spent time with mental health patients. She realized that just visiting with these patients made a difference in their lives, so she decided to volunteer three days each week for eight hours a day throughout the summer. Her duties included feeding the patients, stocking supplies, and washing dishes. ★

KASIE'S FRIENDS

KASIE WARREN
Hamilton Middle School
Hamilton, Ala.
Kasie led a team of young people that raised over $1,000 for the American Cancer Society in a 24-hour walk-a-thon. After Kasie watched her grandmother suffer and die from cancer, she was determined to do something to help increase the survival rate and community awareness of the deadly disease. Kasie was appointed a team captain for the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life walk-a-thon and spent hours making posters, attending meetings, and raising money. ★

FUNDRAISING FOR CANCER

THATCHER BEAN
Gold Camp Elementary School
Colorado Springs, Colo.
Thatcher a cancer survivor, served as the official spokesperson for his local United Way's annual fund-raising campaign last year. While receiving chemotherapy treatments, Thatcher met and befriended many other children who eventually lost their lives to the disease. Thatcher, fortunate to have survived his own battle, used his experience with cancer to encourage others to help make a difference. Officials of the Pike's Peak United Way chose Thatcher to serve as spokesperson for the $4.1 million annual campaign, and in 1998 he became the organization's most requested speaker. In addition, Thatcher appeared in the campaign video, advertisements, and on television shows to discuss his story and promote the United Way campaign. ★

MEALS FOR THE FAMILIES AT THE RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE

MOLLY FARNETH
Mount Pleasant High School
Wilmington, Del.
Molly turned a volunteer receptionist position with the local Ronald McDonald House into a school-wide project that prepared meals for the families staying at the House. She decided that the residents had enough to worry about without having to cook dinner after a long day at the hospital. Molly decided to organize groups to prepare meals. She designed and distributed flyers, wrote notices for the local paper and school newsletter, briefed interested athletic teams and student organizations, and scheduled dates for meal preparation. ★

SPECIAL OLYMPICS

ANDREW CAMPONELLI
H.B. DuPont Middle School
Hockessin, Del.
Andrew served as a peer tutor for mentally and physically challenged Special Olympics participants. Once a day and often on weekends, Andrew participated in class activities by serving as a teacher, friend, and role model for these special children. He also spent time on the athletic field with his friends, cheering them on as they trained and competed. ★

HELPING THE SICK AND DISABLED

LIFE, CAMERA, ACTION!

Brenda Corace
Palm Harbor University High School
Palm Harbor, Fla.

Brenda started a video project called Life, Camera, Action! That provides families of terminally ill patients with a living record of their loved ones after they're gone. As a volunteer with the Hospice, Brenda saw that terminally ill people often want to share their feelings and memories with their families, but are unable to do so. Brenda obtained a grant to buy video equipment and recruited and trained more than 50 other students to help, and then began filming. Once editing is complete, the tape was presented as a gift to the patient's family. ★

SUPPORT OUR SIBLINGS

Cheryl Barbee
St. Marks School
Boise, Idaho

Cheryl was inspired by her autistic brother to create Support Our Siblings, a group that helps siblings of sick children cope with their frustrations, anxieties, and fears while sharing with others in similar circumstances. Cheryl watched her parents and brother struggle with his diagnosis and the emotional and financial strain that accompanied it. Though her parents participated in many support groups, she noticed that there were no support systems for siblings. So, she decided to create her own support group to address her needs and the needs of other siblings of chronically ill children in the community. Cheryl first solicited the support of her school principal and counselor. She then scheduled dates, promoted the support group, sought donations, and recruited counselors to share their expertise. ★

DIABETES AND AWARENESS

Jessica Moore
Sacred Heart Academy
Louisville, Ky.

Jessica raised close to $20,000 for the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation (JDF) to help find a cure for the disease her mother had been living with since she was five years old. Jessica spent countless hours raising money and awareness of diabetes throughout her school and local community, conducting a letter-writing campaign, coordinating educational programs, and organizing teams for fund-raising walks. ★

FUNDRAISING FOR CANCER

Amanda Langley
Kinder High School
Kinder, La.

Amanda organized an all-girl assembly at her school to raise awareness of breast cancer, and also coordinated a fundraiser for the American Cancer Society. After obtaining permission from her principal to hold the event, Amanda arranged for the school nurse to speak at the assembly, researched statistics to present to her peers, and cut pink ribbons for all attendees to wear and sell as a way to raise money to fight cancer. ★

EPILEPSY AWARENESS

Nicole Armand
St. Scholastica Academy
Covington, La.

Nicole planned and raised funds for a private evening at an amusement park for children with epilepsy and their families. After undergoing brain surgery to correct a seizure disorder, Nicole made it her mission to raise awareness of epilepsy. She raised more than $4,000 to cover the costs by lecturing about her personal experiences with epilepsy and participating in musical performances. She rented the amusement park, recruited clowns, face painters, storytellers and musicians for the event, and persuaded several organizations to provide game booths and prizes. ★

KIDS HELPING HOPKINS

Heather Feldheim
Hereford Middle School
Monkton, Md.

Heather volunteered for Kids Helping Hopkins, a program in which young people help others their age who are undergoing treatment at Johns Hopkins Children's Hospital. Heather created 150 craft kits to keep patients busy while in bed. Realizing the limited space and mobility the patients would have, Heather developed projects that would fit in a plastic food storage bag. She gathered the supplies, typed directions on her computer, and made model crafts to include in the kits. With the help of her teacher, Heather then organized a loose-change collection at her school that raised over $500 for the hospital. Heather also organized an after-school quilting class, where students learned to make quilts that were donated to young AIDS patients. ★

BICYCLING FOR AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION

Jared Van Ittersum
Spring Lake High School
Spring Lake, Mich.

Jared raised more than $9,000 for the American Lung Association by participating in a cross-country bicycle trip. In order to participate, he needed to collect pledges of at least $6,000. After facing rejection from local businesses, he canvassed door-to-door in neighborhood after neighborhood, five nights a week for six weeks. Through sheer perseverance, and with help from family, teachers, local news media and the Lung Association's local chapter, Jared finally reached--and then exceeded--his goal. ★

WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL

Amy Flavin
Lawton Middle School
Lawton, Mich.

Amy organized a wheelchair basketball game to raise money for a coach at her school who had been severely injured in a head-on collision with a drunk driver. Amy and a groups of friends invited a professional wheelchair team to compete against students and faculty in the game, solicited donations to print jerseys, produced tickets and programs, and prepared special fund-raising activities for game spectators. Besides raising $1,000, the game fostered greater understanding of disabled people and the dangers of alcohol. ★

CRANKING A CD FOR CANCER PATIENTS

Jeffrey Lange
Wellesley High School
Wellesley, Miss.

Jeffrey made and sold a music recording that raised more than $1,000 for the Massachusetts Breast Cancer Coalition (MBCC). Jeff created his CD to support a former teacher and close friend who had lost his wife to breast cancer. Jeff, a musician, composed a piece of music in memory of his teacher's wife, rehearsed with his band, and then located a professional studio to make a recording. After the music was copyrighted and mass-produced on CDs and tapes, he obtained permission to sell them in his school's store and in front of a local market. ★

HELPING THE SICK AND DISABLED

HALLOWEEN PARTY FOR CANCER PATIENTS

PATRICIA WILLIAMS
Our Lady Academy
Bay St. Louis, Miss.

Patricia initiated a Halloween party for young cancer patients on behalf of her Catholic Youth Organization. After hearing how young cancer patients often need babysitters so their parents can attend support group meetings, Patricia decided that she would throw a Halloween costume party for children of a local support group. She joined forces with a CYO from a neighboring parish, designed activities, solicited funds for prizes, and hosted a car wash to raise money to support the event. More than 60 children attended the party. ★

TOY SALE FOR CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

MARC ELLIOT
Parkway Central Elementary School
Chesterfield, Mo.

Marc started an annual toy sale that has raised more than $2,000 for the playroom at St. Louis Children's Hospital. After enduring many stays himself at the hospital, Marc felt a special bond to the hospital and wanted to give something back. He remembered how much he enjoyed the playroom during his stay and thought a toy sale could ensure that it would continue to be a fun place for kids to go when they are in the hospital. Marc encouraged his classmates to participate by sharing his story with them, resulting in the donation of more than 250 toys for the sale. ★

PENNIES FOR PENNY

SHILA YOUNG
Middle School
Reno, Nev.

Shila conducted a five-month fund-raising campaign called Pennies for Jenny that raised $25,000 to benefit her best friend, who later died of cancer. When Shila learned of Jenny's illness and heard that Jenny's mother could not afford to stop working to be with her daughter, she recruited fellow students and community members to join the campaign, and sent collection bottles to area churches, temples and other community sites. She also helped to arrange fundraisers that involved a local radio DJ, a garage sale and a car show. ★

HELP THEM HEAL FUND

JOEL YEATON
Exeter High School
Exeter, N.H.

Joel created the Help Them Heal Fund at Children's Hospital in Boston to support spinal-cord research and hospital improvements to ease spinal patients' long hospital stays. Joel, motivated by his own numerous and long hospital visits recovering from spinal surgery, felt the hardest part of an extended stay was being out of touch with family, friends, and schoolmates. He began by working closely with hospital officials to determine the requirements that needed to be met to arrange a permanent hospital fund. Then Joel solicited local businesses, held bake sales, and publicized his cause in the media to encourage monetary donations. Joel has raised more than $10,000 since his campaign began and the fund has helped purchase computers with Internet access so young patients can stay in touch with friends and keep up with school work. ★

HEART ASSOCIATION WALK

LYNDSEY COLBURN
Rundlett Middle School
Concord, N.H.

Lyndsey helped double the amount of money raised in an annual heart-disease fundraiser in her county by serving as Junior Chairperson for the Merrimack County Heart Association Heart Walk. She attended training sessions to learn about the ailment and how the American Heart Association uses the funds raised from the Heart Walk to conduct research. She then spoke to about 1,500 of her peers at various school assemblies and urged young people to take part. In the end, the Merrimack County Heart Walk raised $30,000, twice the amount of the previous year. ★

COOPERATIVE COMPETITION BENEFITING ST. JUDE'S HOSPITAL

KELLY KESSLER
Sussex Middle School
Sussex, N.J.

Kelly led a fund-raising campaign in her school that raised $1,176 for cancer research at St. Jude's Children's Hospital and Research Center for Cancer. Kelly, with the help of three friends, designed a cooperative competition among their school's 21 homerooms to solicit student donations, promising a pizza party for the top class. They announced and promoted the contest, monitored progress toward their $1,000 goal, recruited helpers to collect all of the donations, and ended up exceeding their goal. ★

FUNDRAISING FOR CYSTIC FIBROSIS

DANA WALSH
Oceanside Middle School
Oceanside, N.Y.

Dana proposed and coordinated a fund-raising drive at her school that collected $3,000 for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. Dana knows people with cystic fibrosis in her community and was determined to fight for them. Dana spent weeks planning an evening in which students telephoned community members to request pledges. The final tally was three times Dana's original goal. ★

OPERATION SMILE CLUB

ELIZABETH SHENK
St. Francis DeSales High School
Columbus, Ohio

Elizabeth worked actively on behalf of Operation Smile, an organization that performs free reconstructive surgery on deformed children in third-world countries. Elizabeth launched an Operation Smile club at her school, attended youth conferences to learn more about the cause, and led her classmates in raising money for the organization. ★

COINS FOR COURTNEY

LAUREN KULEY
Bridgetown Junior High School
Cincinnati, Ohio

Lauren conducted a fund-raising campaign at her school that raised $3,600 to help treat a young girl in her community stricken with an inoperable brain tumor. After hearing about the first-grader's condition and her family's inability to afford life-saving medical treatments, Lauren persuaded her student council advisors to support a fund-raising competition called Coins for Courtney. ★

HELPING THE SICK AND DISABLED

GREAT STRIDES FOR CYSTIC FIBROSIS

LAUREN DETRICH
Monte Cassino School
Tulsa, Okla.

Lauren served as the chairperson, poster child, and goodwill ambassador for Great Strides for Cystic Fibrosis, a Tulsa fund-raising event to benefit cystic fibrosis research. Lauren's inspiration stemmed from her own struggle with the disease and the desire to find a cure so other children would not have to suffer. In addition to her role as chairperson, Lauren set a personal goal to raise $50,000. By the end of an eight-month campaign, Lauren had reached her $50,000 mark, and the entire event raised $100,000. ★

WORKING WITH THE AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

GREGORY BONETTI
Gorton Junior High School
Warwick, R.I.

Gregory volunteered and was a member of the Teen Board of Cancer for the Pawtucket chapter of The American Cancer Society. Motivated by his grandfather's death from malignant melanoma, Greg started volunteering in an effort to spread the cancer prevention message. Greg has created and distributed a petition seeking increased government funding for cancer research. In addition, he and other teen volunteers have created ideas for a website to promote cancer awareness among the teen population. ★

HORSEBACK RIDING FOR THE MENTALLY DISABLED

LINDSEY ODOM
Southside Middle School
Florence, S.C.

Lindsey helped give horse-riding lessons each week to residents of a local facility for the mentally disabled. While at the farm where she kept her own horse, Lindsey observed the farm's owner giving riding lessons. Seeing how much they enjoyed themselves and how excited they became she wanted to be a part of their riding experience. Lindsey helped the riding students mount and dismount safely, and lead their horses while they receive instruction. ★

PUPPY TRAINING IN EPILEPSY ASSISTANCE

ALLEN MUNGER
Warner Middle School
Mansfield, S.Dak.

Allen a member of the Brown County Extension 4-H in Aberdeen volunteered with the Great Plains Assistance Dogs Association, to train a puppy to become an assistance dog for an epileptic patient. Wanting to make a difference for his aunt and other epileptics by training an assistance dog, Allen spent several hours each day with his puppy teaching her basic skills. Once Allen completed the basic training, the dog was returned to the Assistance Dogs Association for two years of very specific training. ★

YOUTH COPING WITH CANCER

BRITTANY BLOCKMAN
St. Mary's Episcopal School

Brittany founded and directed a support group for teens and young adults who had a parent or close family member with cancer. When her mother was treated for cancer, Brittany searched for a support group for teens, and finding none, decided to start her own, called Youth Coping with Cancer. She spread the word about her group through schools and cancer-related organizations, and soon had enough response to start monthly meetings. She also volunteered at St. Jude Children's Research and Cancer Hospital where she wrote and designed computer generated, patient- orientated primers on childhood cancers. ★

WHEELCHAIR CADDIES

ELIZABETH CABLE
Johnson County Middle School
Mountain City, Tenn.

Elizabeth designed and sewed wheelchair caddies for 276 wheelchair-bound people in her county. She came up with the idea after watching her grandmother struggle to reach for things she needed while sitting in her wheelchair. Elizabeth realized that other people confined to wheelchairs must have similar difficulties, so she made a pattern, found a small business willing to donate fabric and ribbon, and began sewing her caddies, which are designed to tie onto the chair and hold books, glasses, pens and other objects. She called nursing homes, schools, a therapeutic nursery and the Appalachian Home Health Care Service to locate people who might need her product, and then called on family and friends to help deliver them. ★

STUFFED ANIMALS FOR SICK AND ABUSED CHILDREN

ALISIA OROSCO
Clack Middle School
Abilene, Tex.

Alisia used her allowance money to buy stuffed animals for sick and abused children. While visiting her baby brother in the hospital, Alisia noticed other young patients who had no visitors, balloons or toys. Alisia and her other brother pooled their allowances to buy 15 animals, and brought them to pediatric patients in red wagons with hearts attached that read "You are special!" Soon after, Alisia's baby brother passed away, and Alisia vowed to continue her project in his memory. She began recruiting helpers, soliciting donations and raising money, and was able to purchase 250 stuffed animals the second year, which were distributed through a number of non-profit organizations. ★

HAND AND FOOT MOLD REMEMBRANCES

SHARIFA RAMAILEH
Bountiful High School
Bountiful, Utah

Sharifa created plaster hand and foot molds of terminally ill children as keepsakes for family members in association with a children's hospice agency. Sharifa was moved to take on this project with the help of her mother after her 6-year-old sister died of leukemia. To share this unique gift with others, Sharifa became a volunteer for a community hospice agency for children, which puts her in contact with dying children and their families. ★

THERAPEUTIC HORSE RIDING

PATTY SHULTZ
Mount Anthony Union Middle School
North Bennington, Vt.

Patty volunteered weekly for a local therapeutic horse-riding program, through which she taught disabled children to ride horses. Patty saw an advertisement seeking volunteers for the riding program and thought it would be a wonderful way to help children. Patty participated in a training process so she could learn how to instruct others to ride, and how to work with disabled children, who not only derive great enjoyment from the activity, but also build their confidence while learning to ride. ★

CHRISTMAS GIFTS FOR THE MENTALLY AND HYSICALLY DISABLED

TYRELL NICKENS
Lancaster Intermediate School
Kilmarnock, Va.
Tyrell created a Christmas fund that provided 300 gifts to mentally and physically disabled people throughout a 10-county area. For several years Tyrell enjoyed helping his mother, a caseworker for mentally handicapped individuals, arrange holiday gifts for her clients. When his mother could no longer devote time to this activity, he decided he would take on the project. Tyrell obtained Christmas wish lists from those he wanted to help, solicited donations from individuals and organizations, and then purchased and wrapped his gifts. He also recruited volunteers to help him plan a Christmas party for his special friends with games, music, dancing, lunch. and Santa Claus. ★

GUIDE DOG PUPPY IN TRAINING

SARAH BAKER
Thomas Jefferson High School
Auburn, Wash.
Sarah raised three puppies to become seeing-eye dogs for Guide Dogs for the Blind, Inc. She got involved three years ago after seeing a dog in a store wearing a jacket that read "guide dog puppy in training." Intrigued, Sarah contacted a local 4-H club that coordinated the guide dog program and began taking classes to prepare for puppy training. For Sarah, training the puppies involved teaching the puppies commands and taking them to school, church, Girl Scout and 4-H meetings, restaurants and stores. ★

T-BALL TEAM FOR THE HANDICAPPED

MELANIE DANIELS
Independence High School
Coal City, W.Va.
Melanie started a special needs T-ball team for mentally and physically handicapped children ages 4 to 19. Melanie launched her ambitious project after her 4-year-old nephew tearfully told her one day that he wasn't allowed to play T-ball because he was paralyzed below the knees. She contacted the owner of the local T-ball field about holding games there and he was so excited about the idea, he offered to buy the players' uniforms. Melanie then contacted local schools, held sign-up sessions, and recruited umpires and "shadows" to help players in wheelchairs. She also coordinated a fund-raising candy bar sale that raised $1,500 to buy a baseball glove for each player. ★

SUMMER TUTORING FOR SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS

STACY HAWTHORNE
Moundsville Junior High School
Moundsville, W.Va.
Stacy served her community last summer as a student volunteer for students with special needs. After tutoring a special-needs student as part of a school project, Stacy was asked by her principal if she would be willing to work with other physically and mentally challenged young people during her county's summer school session. She eagerly volunteered every weekday for one month to teach the students how to plant flowers, swim, and enjoy other activities, like going to the movies and dining out. ★

MENTORING COGNITIVELY DISABLED STUDENTS

ELIZABETH CONN
Lake Shore Middle School
Mequon, Wis.
Elizabeth started a volunteer mentoring program at her school for cognitively disabled students. Inspired by her mildly autistic older sister, Elizabeth wanted to reach out to other students with learning disabilities. She started her mentoring work when she was just 9 years old, and two years later began recruiting other students to serve as mentors for special-needs kids, befriend them, and help them learn. Elizabeth spent two hours each day helping her students with reading, writing, math and computer skills. ★

"Most of all, I will never forget the children who hugged me, smiled and cried when I left. I will never forget their faces smiling as they each observed their new appearance in a mirror for the first time."

ELIZABETH SHENK

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Campaigning Against Substance Abuse and Violence

TEACHING THROUGH STORIES

JONATHAN CHISM
Jack Robey Junior High School
Pine Bluff, Ariz.
Jonathan educated elementary school children in his community about the dangers of substance abuse. He spoke at local elementary schools, using familiar fairy tales to illustrate his points. His goal was to prevent substance abuse by offering younger children role models who are closer to their own age. ★

STUDENTS TAKING A NEW DIRECTION (STAND)

MARISSA OLSON
Green Mountain High School
Lakewood, Colo.
Marissa founded her school's chapter of Students Taking A New Direction (STAND), which aims to raise awareness and reduce the incidence of teen alcohol and drug abuse and violence. Among the activities she helped organize was a Neon Drunk Driving Simulator program, enabling students to experience how it feels to drive under the influence of intoxicants. ★

BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB

TIFFANI FONSECA
Jefferson Junior High School
Washington, D.C.
Tiffani worked as a volunteer intern at the Washington Boys and Girls Club. Tiffani spent time talking with children who have substance abuse and family problems about ways to turn their lives around. Tiffani's service was inspired by her participation in the "Do The Write Thing" essay contest, in which she wrote about ways to prevent violence in schools and communities. ★

SAFE-PAC

JOCELYN BUCK
Friendly High School
Fort Washington, MD
Jocelyn created the Substance and Alcohol Free Environment for Parents and Children (SAFE-PAC) program, for which she also received the Girl Scouts of the Nation's Capital Gold Award. Jocelyn distributed SAFE-PAC resource kits that contain posters, coloring books, books, pamphlets, and other items that deliver her message about substance abuse and its prevention. ★

TRIP ON THIS

PEACHY MYERS
Rolla High School
Rolla, Mo.
Peachy worked with the Trip on This drug and alcohol abuse prevention campaign. She has raised funds for her project, organized special events, and helped establish her school's District Drug and Alcohol Awareness Committee. Patricia saw adolescent substance abuse as a problem facing the entire community and tried to involve local businesses and community organizations, as well as students. ★

STUDENTS AGAINST VIOLENCE EVERYWHERE (SAVE)

JENNIFER EATON
Garner High School
Garner, N.C.
Jennifer led her school's Students Against Violence Everywhere (SAVE) program. Garner's SAVE program received $100,000 in grants, offered gun safety programs at local elementary schools, and sponsored a variety of anti-violence activities. Jennifer has given talks in several states and is one of two students on the N.C. Governor's Crime Commission. ★

KIDSFEST

JUSTIN EVELOFF
Kirn Junior High
Council Bluffs, Iowa
Justin helped found Iowa Children's Recognition Day after two youngsters were murdered in his town. Inspired to build greater awareness of the dangers of violence to children, he organized Kidsfest, an evening of entertainment and children's safety demonstrations. Justin collected $650 in donations, which was used for entertainment, postage, advertising, and other costs to carry out the five-hour community event. ★

TAKE BACK THE NIGHT MARCH

ANNE TREAT
Fargo South High School
Fargo, N.D.

Anne an advocate for victims of domestic violence and sexual abuse, volunteered at Fargo's Rape and Abuse Crisis Center, answering phone calls from victims during her several 12-hour shifts each month. To honor survivors of abuse and reclaim the safety of the streets, she organized and promoted Fargo's annual Take Back the Night march, which this year had the highest attendance ever. ★

DRUG PREVENTION PROGRAM

LAUREN BENSON
Benton High School
Benton, Ariz.

Lauren developed a drug prevention program after watching a relative and a good friend suffer from years of drug and alcohol abuse. She was convinced that teens needed more than a warning to "just say no" to drugs --she believed that peer support was the key. After accepting the title of Miss Teen of Arkansas for 1997, Lauren kicked off Two by Two, a buddy-check program for teens who promise to be drug- and alcohol-free and support their buddies in the same challenge. In her effort to promote the program, Lauren wrote hundreds of letters and spoke at numerous events, including the Governor's Youth Conference on alcohol and drug abuse. Lauren has taken Two by Two to Arkansas, Texas, Ohio and Mississippi. ★

COMMUNITY ACCEPTANCE AND HARMONY

JAMES CALISTER
Columbia High School
Maplewood, N.J.

James recognized a need to promote an attitude of acceptance and racial harmony in an area that was slowly changing from an all-white, affluent community to one consisting of residents from many races and economic backgrounds. Prejudice and fear drove many long-time residents out of town, and heightened anger among many adults and youth. James began attending community planning meetings and Board of Education meetings, where he learned how to influence decision-makers to help in his fight against racism. He joined the Racial Balance Task Force, and won an election for Student Council President based on his promise to improve relations within the schools and the community. In addition, James spent much of his free time helping to coordinate various community and school-wide events, such as Diversity Day and Martin Luther King Day, which help to promote diversity. ★

COWBOY DAVE ANTI-DRUG MESSAGE

MARK JONES
North Marion High School
Farmington, W.Va.

Mark transformed a minimal volunteer position with a local tobacco coalition into a self-initiated drug and tobacco prevention program geared toward youngsters. Cowboy Dave, Mark's stage persona, takes a wooden horse with anti-drug messages hanging from its ears to day care centers, schools, scout troops, libraries, summer camps, and church groups throughout Marion County. ★

JENNY--A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A TEENAGE DRUG ADDICT

JENNY HUNGERFORD
Parkview High School
Orfordville, Wisc.

Jenny says she wasted nearly three years of her life hooked on drugs and running away from home. When she finally recovered at the age of 14, Jenny decided that her experiences could help others turn away from the temptation of drugs. Working with her mother and using only true-life experiences, she scripted a reenactment called, "Jenny--A Day in the Life of a Teenage Addict," which she and her mom presented to schools, youth conferences, treatment facilities and community groups. As interest in the performance grew, Jenny's public speaking skills increased and she decided to expand the program with the help of the Wisconsin Association for Runaway Services. Jenny coordinated most of the logistics herself, from the writing of the script to securing props, producing and distributing press materials, scheduling performances, and soliciting funds. ★

B.A.D.D.D.

GABRIELLA CONTRERAS
Roskruge Elementary and Middle School
Tucson, Ariz.

Gabriella founded "Club B.A.D.D.D. (Be Alert Don't Do Drugs)" after learning that gang violence, riots, and drug use pervaded the neighboring high school. She started small by gathering a group of eight friends who marched in front of the school with signs that read, "Stop the Violence" and "Don't Do Drugs." Slowly, the group evolved into a community service organization that enabled members to use their time and energy in a positive way--by volunteering to help others rather than getting involved in violence, drugs, or gangs. Gabriella, who earned the respect and support of the school principal, recruited new members, conducted weekly meetings, and organized service activities involving Club B.A.D.D.D.'s 65 members. Determined to have an impact beyond her own community, she designed a how-to packet to help interested students start similar clubs in other communities. ★

BANNING GUN BULLETS

THEODOROS MILONOPOULOS
Curtis School Los Angeles
Studio City, Calif.

Theodoros conducted a kids' petition campaign to ban the sale of gun bullets in the City of Los Angeles. Ennis Cosby was killed a block from Theo's school, and a few weeks later two bank robbers went on a wild shooting spree in his neighborhood. At about the same time, Theo became aware of several school shootings across the country, and learned that nearly 100 children are killed by gunfire in Los Angeles every year. So Theo began researching the gun control issue, and then asked his City Council representative for information on how to make a city law. He discovered that new laws could be proposed through petition drives by registered voters--but not by kids. Inspired by others, who have had to fight for their rights in the past, Theo was determined to start a petition for kids anyway. He circulated petitions to over 175 schools and collected 5,000 signatures from local youths. ★

CHILD AWARENESS

BRANDY HOSKINS
New Albany High School
New Albany, Ind.

Brandy created a child abuse awareness and fund-raising campaign to benefit the Indiana chapter of Child Abuse Prevention. Aware of the damaging effects of child abuse and encouraged by a school counselor who is active in the Indiana Child Abuse Prevention Committee, Brandy recruited fellow students to write and distribute a booklet about child abuse, sell awareness ribbons for Child Abuse Prevention Week, and hold a fund-raising Penny War between various school grades. In addition, she led an Awareness Balloon Launch, coordinated school assemblies on child abuse prevention, and ended up raising more than $1,000. ★

DEALING WITH IT

JENNIFER TAYLOR
Tri-North Middle School
Bloomington, Ind.

Jennifer founded and now presides over Dealing With It, a substance abuse prevention coalition at her school. Motivated by a friend who had started using drugs, Jennifer attended a prevention workshop and learned how to organize a group. She also conducted research and found that the percentage of Monroe County 7-12 graders who abused substances was higher than the national average. She encouraged her school principal to support the group and began holding weekly Dealing With It meetings, during which group members brainstormed ways to get the prevention word out to as many students as possible. Thanks to Jennifer's efforts, her school received a small grant to fund a prevention newsletter and billboard, and she hosted a workshop to teach 20 students from other schools how to start coalitions in their schools. ★

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PREVENTION

STACEY PICKERING
Cape Elizabeth High School
Cape Elizabeth, Maine

Stacey taught domestic violence awareness courses to high school students for more than three years as a volunteer educator for the Young Adult Abuse Prevention Program of Maine. In addition to teaching violence prevention, Stacey helped organize a march to call attention to murdered victims of domestic abuse, and volunteered as an operator with a crisis help line. To conduct her course, she developed lesson plans and skits that deal with oppression, violence, stereotypes, sex roles, and gender issues. She taught as many as five courses a month, with each requiring at least two days of prep work. ★

DRUNK DRIVING AWARENESS

JOSHUA HEWITT
Perry Central High School
Perry, N.Y.

Joshua staged a simulated traffic accident at his school to graphically demonstrate to other students the horrors of drunk driving. It took him two years to obtain the approval of his school to simulate a fatal crash for the student body. When he received the o.k., he contacted the local fire department, police, sheriff, and ambulance company to solicit their assistance. He also arranged for the participation of a mercy flight helicopter, the county coroner, the District Attorney's office, and a local funeral director. A local car dealer was asked to provide two smashed-up vehicles, and students and parents were asked to role-play in the enactment. The big event took place in front of the entire student body on a school--day afternoon--two days before the junior-class prom. The simulation was covered by the local news media and professionally videotaped for future use as a tool for emergency training and community education in Perry. ★

GUNS AREN'T FUN

CODY HILL
Lincoln High School
Portland, Oreg.

Cody conceived and coordinated Guns Aren't Fun, a toy gun trade-in event that developed into a non-profit organization to spread a message of violence prevention across the country. When Cody was 10, he heard about an adult gun exchange and remembers his mother mentioning that a toy gun exchange for kids would also be a smart idea. A few years later, Cody and his family saw a person shoot someone and then kill himself. His concept for a toy gun trade-in was simple: encourage kids to trade their toy guns for other, non-violent toys. In order to raise funds to purchase the new toys, Cody asked a local non-profit organization to collect donations, and then raised $13,000 as well as in-kind contributions after appearing in a local newspaper article. He also drew attention to his project by winning the support of Portland's pro basketball team. More than 100 toy guns were turned in during two trade-in events. News of his project has spread across America, and Guns Aren't Fun will soon be hosting toy gun trade-ins in other states. ★

SWACADAS--STUDENTS WHO ARE CARING ABOUT DRUGS AND SAFETY

BRANDON HUSSEY
Waco High School
Waco, Tex.

Brandon a founding member and past president of a student-led organization called SWACADAS--Students Who Are Caring About Drugs And Safety. After Brandon lost a close personal friend to a drug overdose, he had the opportunity to help start a student committee to address teen drug, violence, and safety issues at the Methodist Children's Home in Waco. His organization delivered presentations to other students on subjects such as drugs, guns, and peer pressure; operates a 24-hour help hotline; and escorted students through a program that shows what it's like to be in prison. ★

"The thing about violence is that it is learned, but it doesn't have to be. If we educate our youth, give survivors and their children a safe place to grow, and hold batterers accountable, we can move toward ending the cycle. This is inspiration enough."

STACEY BICKERING

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Improving Community Facilities

LIGHTING AND SOUND CONTROL

CHRISTOPHER HAAGEN
Moscow High School
Moscow, Idaho
Christopher built a fully professional lighting and sound control booth for his high school auditorium, which the local school district was unable to fund. Christopher designed the booth, sought equipment and supply donations, and built the new control booth as a service to his school. The auditorium is now in demand for concerts, pageants and festivals. ★

PICNIC TABLES

KYLE LOBERG
Target Range School
Missoula Mont.
Kyle built picnic tables for his school. When Kyle asked his school's PTA what they thought the school needed most, they told him picnic tables. He arranged for donated lumber and supplies, designed the tables, and worked with his Boy Scout troop to build the tables for his school. ★

TRASH BASH

AARON DICKSON
Clovis High School
Clovis, N.M.
Aaron organized Trash Bash '95. His community event helped clean up an area of 155 blocks, including two school environs. Games and activities were organized, food was served, and many community organizations participated. Aaron handled all of the planning and publicity for the event and is currently working on Trash Bash '96. ★

RESTORED MEMORIAL

BRIAN HENION
Rugby Middle School
Hendersonville, N.C.
Brian restored the badly neglected Leander and Vernon Johnson Memorial near his school. He made its restoration his Eagle Scout project for the benefit of his community and as a tribute to the Johnsons, who donated the land for his school. Brian set up work parties that removed dead trees, built a new walkway, added a park bench, and planted new shrubs and flowers. ★

CLEAN UP HIGHWAYS AND DITCHES

KENDAL ALEXANDER
Erik Ramstad Middle School
Minot, N.D.
Kendal worked with the Lutheran Brotherhood Branch in his community. Kendal has planted trees, cleaned up highways and ditches, stocked the local food bank, visited local senior citizens, and helped provide safe activities for younger children on Halloween. ★

BATTLESHIP TEXAS STUDENT RESTORATION PROJECT

JASON CUNNINGHAM
School of Dallas
Dallas, Texas
Jason launched the Battleship Texas Student Restoration Project. After hearing about the deterioration of the historic ship, Jason worked with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the American Legion to initiate a statewide program in which Texas schools adopt portions of the ship and raise money for it. Several grant donors have approached Jason, and the fundraising portion of the program is underway. ★

A NEW PA SYSTEM

JACOB SCHANZENBACK
Liberty High School
Spangle, Wash.
Jacob designed and implemented a new address system for the entire hometown of Rosalia. After working with local volunteer fire and ambulance corps, Jacob determined that the city's address system made it difficult for the emergency services to find homes. Jacob surveyed Rosalia and developed an entirely new address schema. The city council adopted his plan which helped emergency workers respond more quickly. ★

IDAMAY TEEN VOLUNTEER GROUP

JARED PITMAN
North Marion High School
Farmington, W. Va.
Jared created this group in his hometown. The

IMPROVING COMMUNITY FACILITIES

group is dedicated to improving Idamay by helping the elderly and beautifying public areas. Jared worked with his town's postmaster, it's Improvement Board, and the members of his community to plant shrubs and flowers, repaint neglected buildings, and encourage citizens to take more pride in their town. ★

RESTORING A PLAYGROUND

EDDIE ARMSTRONG
North Little Rock High School
North Little Rock, Ariz.
Eddie helped re-build a dilapidated and dangerous playground in his apartment complex. Having enjoyed the playground as a child, Eddie made a plea to the state Department of Housing and Urban Development and received a grant to fund the restoration of the lot. New playground equipment and a basketball court were provided, and the area, previously deserted, is once again an attractive place for kids to play. ★

YOUTH CENTER

CHARLES DARUS
Cairo High School
Cairo, Ga.
Charles was chairman of the Grady County Junior Leadership Council, which opened a youth center in downtown Cairo. To fund the center, he organized a group of over 100 youth to raise money for the renovation of a donated building and the first year's operating costs. The group raised more than $50,000 through a benefit rock concert and a local radio station's donation of a day's worth of advertising sales. ★

COMMUNITY PARK RENOVATION

STEPHEN LAAPER
Castle High School
Newburgh, Ind.
Stephen organized and coordinated the renovation of a local community park for his Eagle Scout project. After seeking donations to fund the project and recruiting volunteers to help him, he constructed a geodesic dome out of metal pipes for kids to climb on, and replaced railroad ties, which could potentially cause chemical burns, with new lumber. ★

A PLACE OF SOLITUDE

KATHERINE LINDLE
Assumption High School
Louisville, Ky.
Katherine created a chapel at her school. She spent over 560 hours planning, painting, furnishing, lighting, carpeting, and decorating the room in the Catholic school. All materials were provided through donations from the community. Katherine constructed the chapel to provide a place for solitude and peace for the 900 students. ★

GREENWAY

JASON HALL
Salisbury High School
Salisbury, N.C.
Jason built a 24-foot pedestrian bridge for a newly developed park area called the Greenway. Hoping to increase public interest in the area with the construction of the bridge, Jason persuaded local businesses to donate needed materials and recruited more than 50 members of his Boy Scout troop to dedicate 800 hours to the project. Increased funding from the community has since provided the Greenway with playing fields. ★

BUILDING A PEDESTRIAN PATH

STEVEN ROGERS
Rugby Middle School
Hendersonville, N.C.
Steven helped build a pedestrian path for the Historic Johnson Farm, which held events sponsored by the local community. The farm's driveway was too narrow for cars and pedestrians to use at the same time, so Steven spent 15 hours planning the project, and enlisted the help of more than 30 people in the construction of the walkway. The path was finished in time for the farm's largest festival of the year. ★

A TRIBUTE TO THE TOWN HISTORY

TRENT ANDERSON
Spanish Fork Junior High School
Spanish Fork, Utah
Trent spent 226 hours constructing a tribute to his town's history. After he helped design informational plaques to be displayed on a plot of land, a fence was put up around the area, and a bench was added from an old church in town. With Trent's encouragement, a total of $850 was donated by community members and the site was completed. ★

THE OLD FORT KOSHKONOG

ALAN SIMPSON
J.F. Luther Middle School
Fort Atkinson, Wisc.
Alan started a fund-raising campaign to save a community landmark. The Old Fort Koshkonog was damaged by a fire in July, and was in danger of being torn down. His campaign to save the historic building included a bottle drive, a folk music festival, and a request for donations. Alan made the first donation of $5 from his birthday money, and ended up raising over $13,000 for the restoration of the Fort. ★

GETTING RID OF GRAFFITI

MADELEINE ELISH
Ellis School
Pittsburgh, Pa.
Madeleine organized a project to paint over graffiti in Pittsburgh. With paint and supplies provided by the Friendship Preservation Group, a community organization, Madeleine and 17 friends painted over graffiti at four city locations. ★

BUILDING A PLAYGROUND

BODIE BROWER
Star Valley High School
Afton, Wyo.
Bodie built a playground for the Lower Valley Child Development Center from blueprints to completion. Initially, budget problems forced the center to postpone its plans for the playground. Bodie gained the support of construction professionals who lent their expertise free of charge, family, and friends. ★

IMPROVING COMMUNITY FACILITIES

TECHNOLOGY FOR SCHOOL

RICKEY WHEELING
Gaylesville High School
Gaylesville, Ala.
Rickey envisioned a school that could offer its students the latest computer technology, so he raised the needed funds and built the computers himself. In his sophomore year, Rickey realized that his small, rural high school had hardly enough money for school necessities, much less luxuries like computers. Rickey enlisted the support of his school newspaper, student government, and principal. They initiated a variety of fundraisers, secured matching grants, and arranged for a donation from Hewlett-Packard. Rickey dedicated his summer break to building and networking the computers and installing the software. ★

CREATION OF A YOUTH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

JASON KELLEY
Granite Mountain Middle School
Prescott, Ariz.
Jason, the youngest member of the Prescott Chamber of Commerce, used his involvement to create a Youth Chamber of Commerce. Jason thought that a youth chamber would provide kids who are leaders and entrepreneurs with an outlet for business opportunities. Jason proposed his youth chamber idea, which was approved, and developed the plan to launch and promote it within the community. ★

NEIGHBORHOOD ADVISORY COMMITTEE

JASON JONES
Baker Middle School
Columbus, Ga.
Jason dedicated the past three years of his life to initiating, implementing, and improving a Neighborhood Advisory Committee in his mobile home community. Jay's motivation for the committee was the concern that many of the neighborhood children were playing among trash and graffiti. Jay approached the park manager for support and started a Litter Free Campaign that involved a monthly neighborhood clean up. The success of that campaign led to a food drive for needy families, a hospitality get-together to improve spirit, and free tutorial services for younger children living in the park. ★

VOLUNTEER JANITOR

DANIEL AGUIRRE
Northview Middle School
Ankeny, Iowa
Daniel volunteered 10 hours each week to assist his school janitorial staff in cleaning the school. His project began as a service to the art teachers in the school when Daniel would clean the two art rooms. This eventually led to his interest in assisting the janitors, who now have more time to attend to important school matters thanks to Daniel's help. ★

HISTORIC HOME RESTORATION

ANDREW INGOLD
Andover Middle School
Andover, Kan.
Andrew conducted a penny drive that yielded nearly $1,800 to support the clean-up of an historic home that was vandalized by students from his school. Andy secured his principal's support, decorated drop-off containers, and placed the containers throughout the school and in area businesses. He also secured a matching donation from the Andover State Bank, which boosted the total far above the few hundred dollars Andy hoped to collect. ★

RESTORING AN HISTORIC LANDMARK

JODY DAIGLE
Wisdom High School
St. Agatha, Maine
Jody coordinated the restoration of an historical landmark in his town, a 30-foot water tower that used to provide steam locomotives with water. The fact that this landmark existed came to Jody's attention while reading an article about his town's history. Surprised to find that the water tower, with paint peeling and color fading, had historical significance, Jody decided to approach the Historical Society with a plan to restore the tower to its original appearance. The Historical Society approved Jody's plan, and Jody recruited 15 volunteers to assist with the scraping, priming, and painting of the tower. ★

PROJECT RESCUE VISION

BROCK SNYDER
St. Pius X Regional School
Bowie, Md.
Brock presided over Project Rescue Vision, a fundraising activity Brock created to secure $10,000 in donations to purchase life-saving equipment for his town's fire department. Inspired by a similar campaign run by his brother last year, Brock wanted to ensure that all residents of his town would have a better chance of survival from fire. He recruited assistance from other kids, designed and distributed promotional flyers, obtained donations from local businesses, gave several media interviews, and handled administrative duties. Brock's accomplishments helped purchase two Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus units and three gas monitoring systems for the Bowie Fire Department, one for each fire station. ★

RESTORING A NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

EMILY MATHES
Vicksburg Junior High School
Vicksburg, Miss.
Emily lobbied local government to restore an abandoned and neglected neighborhood park that had been a hangout for drug dealers. She worked for more than a year to enlist the support of the community, from whom she collected signatures on petitions. The city administration approved Emily's plan for the purchase of the land, safe playground equipment, and maintenance. She recruited several of her fellow classmates to clean up the park, and worked with the city architect on an appropriate design for the restored site. ★

LAND BEAUTIFICATION

JESSE WAITE
W. Mack Lyon Middle School
Overton, Nev.
Jesse designed and organized a landscaping project to beautify an empty lot at a local elementary school. Once Jesse received approval from the prin-

IMPROVING COMMUNITY FACILITIES

cipal and school board, he recruited a number of classmates, fellow scouts, and family members to help dig trenches, clear brush, and plant trees and flowers. He also convinced area businesses to support the project by donating landscaping supplies. ★

THE EARTH SERVICE CORPS

KATHLEEN JONES
Concord High School
Concord, N.H.
Kathleen launched an environmental group at her school, The Earth Service Corps. The student-run group, consisting of eight dedicated friends, and an advisor helped build and maintain hiking trails in the community, initiated and conducted recycling programs at the school, and planted trees throughout the county. Kathleen organized weekly meetings, planned group projects, served as a liaison with community groups, and handled all administrative work for the corps. ★

GARAGE TURNED INTO A WORKSHOP

ANIBAL LOZADA
Dorado Academy
Dorado, P.R.
Anibal gave hundreds of hours of his time to complete a variety of projects for the Children's, Adolescents, and Adults Deaf-Blind Institution. Anibal, motivated by a TV commercial that detailed the important work of the institution, helped turn an old garage into a workshop where the patients made ceramics, carpentry projects, and other hand-made crafts. He solicited donations from local businesses for equipment used in the renovation, and held bake sales to raise funds to purchase paint, wood, and light bulbs. ★

BACKYARD BENEFIT

JENNIFER LARSON
Spearfish Middle School
Spearfish, S.D.
Jennifer organized a backyard carnival three years in a row to benefit a campaign for a new library in town. Her love of reading and her frequent use of the old library motivated her to help raise money for the new facility. Jennifer recruited many of her friends to help design and build carnival games, blow up balloons, make and distribute flyers, and sell tickets. ★

FUNDRAISING AND COORDINATING THE RENOVATION OF A TOWN FACILITY

SCOTT STEVENS
Saratoga High School
Saratoga, Wyo.
Scott mobilized his entire town to get behind the much-needed renovation of the town's athletic track. He formed the Saratoga Community Track Association to raise awareness of the problem, raised funds to support the renovation, and enlisted support from engineers and area businesses in the actual improvement. He coordinated blueprints, engineers' activities, water rights, construction bids, and fund-raisers. ★

TOWN CLEAN UP

ZACHARY ADKISON
Carey Junior High School
Cheyenne, Wyo.
Zachary enlisted the support of his teacher and his entire class to clean up Crow Creek, a tributary in town that had been destroyed by garbage. Zach and his mom had talked about how the Crow Creek needed to be cleaned up. He agreed with his mother, and decided to take matters into his own hands. Once Zach's teacher agreed that it was a great class project, Zach and his classmates spent three days removing garbage from the creek, clearing overgrowth, and planting flowers and bushes. ★

PLAYGROUND SAFETY

ESTHER PERMON
Central Middle School of Science
Anchorage, Alaska
Esther spent three years lobbying and working with the city council to replace the Rocket, a much-loved piece of equipment that had been removed from a local playground because it did not meet new safety regulations. Esther learned that the city was going to update the playground, but spent most of the allocated funds on a new parking lot. She was appalled, and began to rally the support of other kids and adults. Esther conducted a survey of the city's young people and presented the results, along with a request for a new Rocket, at a city council meeting. Over the course of many meetings, Esther convinced the council to overturn its original plan and spend more money updating the playground and less on the parking lot. The council also agreed to work with the kids in town to design a new Rocket. ★

SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN IN GHANA

MONIFA VAUGHN-COOKE
Benjamin Banneker Academic High School
Washington, D.C.
Monifa helped build a school in Ghana for children who had previously attended classes in a dirt field. Working with an organization called Experiment in International Living, Monifa spent seven to eight hours a day carrying sand, mixing mortar, making bricks, building the walls and foundation, organizing the tasks of young children, and recruiting villagers to help with the construction. She wanted to help give the children a better learning environment, and provide the impoverished village of Amuana Prasso with a resource that would have a lasting impact for generations to come. When the project was completed, the village had its first-ever schoolhouse, and was able to buy school supplies with the money it saved on construction costs. ★

GARDEN RESTORATION

NATHAN LADD
Atchison County Middle School
Effingham, Kans.
Nathan took on the project of restoring and maintaining a 480-square-foot memorial flower garden in the Effingham City Park. During a walk with his family last year, Nathan's mother commented on the deteriorating garden, and said someone should take care of it. Nathan received permission from the city clerk to take on the project, and with the help of his family; he removed dead vegetation, planted more than a hundred new plants, and fertilized, watered and weeded the garden back to a thing of beauty. The city council appreciated Nathan's efforts so much that they featured the garden on the cover of the city calendar. ★

IMPROVING COMMUNITY FACILITIES

SIDEWALK SAFETY

ANITA TAYLOR
Methuen Comprehensive Grammar School
Methuen, Mass.

Anita successfully petitioned for sidewalks and street lights to be installed on a busy road after a schoolmate was killed in a hit-and-run motor vehicle accident on his way to his own birthday party. The death devastated the entire Methuen community, including Anita, who believed that the accident could have been avoided if the road had had a sidewalk. After talking it over with her parents, Anita typed a petition form with an opening statement explaining the need for the sidewalk and began her quest. After circulating the petition for three weeks, Anita collected 820 signatures. The mayor and a member of the town council came to her classroom to accept the petition, and last summer, construction began on Anita's sidewalk. ★

A SKATEBOARD PARK

JILL LOMBARDI
C.R. Anderson Middle School
Helena, Mont.

Jill served on the Helena Youth Advisory Council and played a leadership role over the past year in two council projects: a skateboard park and Martin Luther King Volunteer Day. Jill recruited interested skateboarders to advise the council on the design of the proposed park, and then helped secure a $50,000 grant to build it. For the volunteer day, Jill analyzed community needs, arranged volunteer projects, coordinated celebration activities, and recruited volunteers. ★

DISASTER RELIEF

PAU MILAN
Baldwin School in Bayamon
Guaynabo, P.R.

Pau worked tirelessly to repair and reopen his school after it was devastated by Hurricane Georges. When the hurricane hit, Pau was worried about how it would affect his school, so he and his family went to the school to inspect it the day after the hurricane swept through town. He began to clear away branches, hoping he could make enough of a difference to get the school running again soon. A small crowd of volunteers helped to cut and clear away the debris, but they needed additional hands. Pau called his friends and recruited a large group of fellow students to join the clean-up effort. Though the volunteers dropped off as the days went on, Pau stuck with it, determined to restore his school's campus to its original condition and get classes going again. Thanks to his efforts, the school opened much earlier than expected. ★

RESTORATION OF A CHILDREN'S WARD

KIMBERLY SANCHEZ
Academia Maria Reina-San Juan
Rio Piedras, P.R.

Kimberly conducted a project to restore a children's ward at a local hospital, and volunteered as an English teacher for elementary children. While visiting the hospital with her school, Kimberly couldn't help but notice how run-down the children's rehabilitation ward was, and how depressing the atmosphere must be for the patients who return daily for therapy. She received permission from the hospital to renovate the ward, and began soliciting funds for the project. More than $1,500 was raised, which enabled Kimberly to purchase the paint and materials she and other volunteers she recruited used to spruce up the ward. Soon after that project, Kimberly noticed that the local library was seeking children's English tutors, so she volunteered. She soon realized that tutoring was not benefiting the children because they were home-schooled and had never learned English. Kimberly developed a curriculum that taught 6-10-year-olds vocabulary using the game Pictionary, verbs by playing Simon Says, and pronunciation by staging a puppet show. At the end of the class, her students could understand English television shows and read books written in English. ★

STARTING A TEEN CENTER

BRAD LUCK
Essex High School
Essex Junction, Vt.

Brad founded and served as president of the Essex Teen Center. While serving as freshman class representative to the Community Wellness Committee, Brad watched as community leaders failed in their attempt to develop a teen center to cut down on teen drug and alcohol use. Brad felt that boredom was the main reason kids were drawn to drugs. So, he decided to start a teen center on his own, this time by involving more young people in the cause. He organized groups to evaluate the potential success of a teen center, and to investigate possible sites and funding. Soon, a board of directors consisting of 20 teens and four adults was formed, and Brad was elected president. As spokesperson, Brad raised community awareness of the group's mission by speaking to community organizations and conducting media interviews. He secured free space from the Board of Education, and led fund-raising efforts that brought in $45,000 to operate the center for two years. The Essex Teen Center has been very successful, with 100-125 kids attending weeknight activities and hundreds attending special events. U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno visited the Essex Teen Center after it opened, and cited it as a model for teens around the country. ★

"No matter how you put it, helping others turns out to be the biggest gift you can give, not only to others, but to yourself as well."

JEFFREY LANGE

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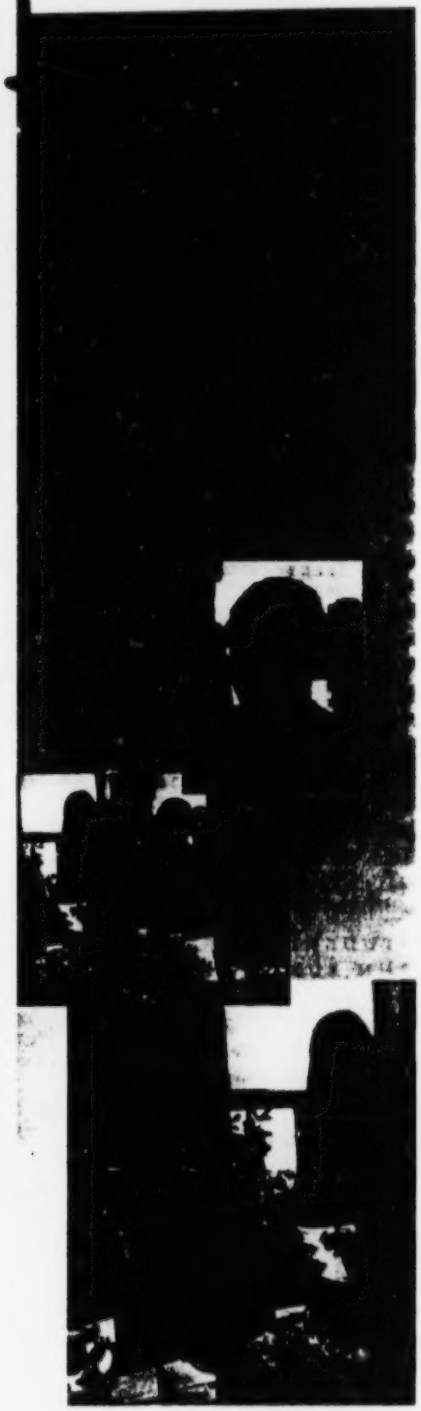
Promoting Volunteerism



ESTABLISHING PARTNERSHIPS

MEGAN HUMPHREY
Central School of Science
Anchorage Alaska
Megan coordinated over 1,800 hours of community service, conducted food drives, planned fundraisers for homeless shelters, organized special events for the elderly, and helped establish partnerships between her school and local businesses as part of her School Business Partnership Class (SBPC). ★

WALK AMERICA

STEPHEN MASSEY
North Canyon High School
Phoenix, Ariz.
Stephen helped organize a statewide promotional campaign for the March of Dimes' 1995 WalkAmerica youth fundraising event. With his help, the 1995 walk raised a record $40,000, and his own school ranked as one of the top contributors in the nation. Stephen was invited to be the only high school student in the nation to serve on a March of Dimes state board of directors. ★

LEO CLUB

LINDSEY KULAS
Windsor Locks Middle School
Windsor Locks, Conn.
Lindsey formed the Leo Club at her school. An extension of the Lions Club, Lindsey's club participated in a variety of community service projects ranging from fundraising for children's hospitals to activities and events for senior citizens. Among its activities, the Leo Club hostsed dances, cleans homes for the elderly, and prepared food for a local soup kitchen. ★

SOCIAL AWARENESS ORGANIZATION (SAO)

CAITLIN CONNOLLY
Cohasset High School
Cohassett Mass.
Caitlin formed the Social Awareness Organization (SAO) at her school. SAO addressed a variety of social issues including racism, sexism, homophobia, and political injustice. The group volunteered with the Head Start Program, raised money for AIDS research, organized a coat drive for the homeless, and created a recycling center at the school to protect the environment. ★

TOGETHER EVERYTHING AMOUNTS TO MORE (TEAM)

GINA GARZA
Wayland High School
Wayland, Mich.
Gina formed her own community service organization, Together Everything Amounts to More (TEAM). Gina has handled administrative responsibilities for the organization and encouraged peer involvement. TEAM has partnered with well-known community groups, like Toys for Tots and the MS Walk, and has sponsored many of its own activities to help local elderly, low income, and disabled citizens. ★

ALL AROUND VOLUNTEER

SUERJEE LEE
Battle Creek Middle School
St. Paul, Minn.
Suerjee worked with several volunteer activities including environmental and political work, interpreting for Asians who do not speak English and spending time with senior citizens in her community. Suerjee, whose parents were born in Laos, says she enjoys learning about St. Paul's past from the senior citizens she helps. She also represented her school on a citywide service committee. ★

HOSPITAL VOLUNTEERS

LINDSEY CHILDERS
Madison Middle School
North Platte, Nebr.
Lindsey worked as a volunteer at a local hospital. Although hospital volunteers are supposed to be 14, Lindsey already has worked over 150 hours helping to organize patient charts, files, and faxes, and she assisted with various other hospital tasks that she says the hospital could not otherwise afford to hire someone to do. ★

VOLUNTEER BABY-SITTING

AMANDA CHAPMAN
Totten Intermediate School 34
Staten Island, N.Y.
Amanda provided a volunteer baby-sitting service during school PTA meetings. Amanda and 10 of her peers supervised the younger children, read to them, and helped them with homework. As a result of Amanda's work, more parents were able to attend the meetings and play a more active role in their children's education. ★

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PROMOTING VOLUNTEERISM

GAMES AND BOOKS

DAVID LUGO
Carvin School
Carolina, P.R.
David led a campaign to donate books and games to adolescents in Puerto Rico's penitentiaries. Working to overcome community apathy toward youthful offenders, David spoke at churches, collected items from neighbors and, with a few classmates, delivered the donations personally to the penitentiaries, where the youthful offenders were both grateful and surprised that their peers cared. ★

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

INGE HANSCH
Mater Christi School
Burlington, Vt.
Inge worked with several community service activities. She has helped serve meals at the Salvation Army, taught Sunday school classes, helped host a tea to provide companionship and diversions for senior citizens, and formed a free child care service. ★

VOLUNTEER COUNSELOR

KIRSTY HICKEY
Central Middle School of Science
Anchorage, Ark.
Kirsty volunteered as a counselor at her local youth center and at a retirement home. He also has helped coordinate more than ten community projects, including the clean up of a neighborhood park and a fundraiser which collected nearly $1,500 for a homeless shelter. Because of her volunteer service, she was the only middle school student in Alaska named to the School Business Partnership Advisory Board. ★

FOOD FOR OTHERS

JONATHAN HOFFENBERG
North Canyon High School
Phoenix, Ariz.
Jonathan coordinated a food service for up to 200 people living in poverty. He recruited students, who were willing to give up their free time one night a week, and prepared and served food at Palomino Elementary School every Wednesday night. He also sent out flyers to spread awareness and encourage others to start similar services throughout the region. ★

SEEING-EYE DOGS

GARAN CALLAWAY
Seaford Middle School
Seaford, Del.
Garan raised seeing-eye dogs as part of her involvement in the 4-H Club. She received the puppies when they were six-weeks old, and was responsible for feeding, housebreaking, basic obedience, and socialization training, until they are 18 months old. She met several of the new dog owners, who benefited from the specialized training. ★

CHURCH CAMP VOLUNTEER

LAKEISHA GRIMES
Browne Junior High School
Washington, D.C.
Lakeisha volunteered as a counselor for her church's summer camp program. For two months, she volunteered six hours a day, Monday through Friday, at the New Image Community Baptist Church. She provided care for young children, helped run activities, and taught the campers about good behavior. ★

YOUTH (YOUTH OUT TO HELP)

LISA-ANNE FURGAL
Largo High School
Largo, Fla.
Lisa-Anne founded a non-profit organization called YOUTH to encourage volunteerism. To inform students about volunteer opportunities, she produced a booklet listing 21 non-profit organizations in her area that seek volunteers and donations. She spent 25 to 40 hours a week planning a newsletter, collecting donations, and meeting with board members. ★

SUMMER SERVICE CLUB

ALISSA TIPPETTS
Blackfoot High School
Blackfoot, Idaho
Alissa created the Summer Service Club to develop pride in her community and perform needed services. She recruited more than 50 students to meet once a week and organize projects such as painting a retirement home, holding a fund-raising car wash, and providing assistance to the elderly. Alissa coordinated projects every week throughout the summer. ★

COUNTY FAIR PROMOTER

CHRISTOPHER HILL
North Iowa High School
Buffalo Center, Iowa
Christopher spent several hundred hours working on the Winnebago County Fair to boost community spirit and increase attendance at the annual event. As president of his county's 4-H club, Hill created and organized a talent show called Spotlight on Entertainment, which he publicized through flyers and public service announcements on the radio. Hundreds of people watched his event at the fair. ★

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE

ERIK REEDY
Topeka West High School
Topeka, Kansas
Erik formed the Youth Action Coalition (YAC) to improve the quality of life in Topeka. Composed of more than 50 students from five area high schools, YAC has supported a number of community projects including the AIDS Memorial Quilt, Kids Voting Kansas, Make-a-Difference Day, phone book recycling, day care programs and many other projects. Reedy started YAC with funds from a Learn and Serve America grant. ★

STUDENT RUN FUNDRAISING

JAMES FRENCH
North Oldham Middle School
Goshen, Ky.
James organized the Junior Booster Club, the only student-run fundraising organization in the Oldham County school system. The club raised over $2,000 to fund athletics, fine arts, media, technology, and cocurricular activities for the school. French recruited 300 students to join his organization. ★

A PROMISE TO REMEMBER

MEREDITH TASSEY
Catherine McAuley High School
Portland, Maine
Meredith headed an AIDS awareness program called A Promise to Remember. She co-wrote a grant application to The San Francisco Names Project and received funding for educational materials, an exhibition of four panels of the AIDS

PROMOTING VOLUNTEERISM

Memorial Quilt, and AIDS education in the classroom. Her school was the first in Maine to develop such a program. ★

EMPTY BOWLS PROJECT

YANICK DALHOUSE
Moorhead Senior High School
Moorhead, Minn.
Yanick organized her area's Empty Bowls Project. This hunger awareness program was sponsored by STARS (Students Taking Action Responding with Service), of which Yanick is president. She spent hundreds of hours coordinating the event, which provided food to over 500 people. The event also raised $6,000 for the Great Plains Food Bank and Fargo-Moorhead Food Pantry. ★

FOLLOW IN OUR FOOTSTEPS

HAVEN SCOGIN
Menaul School
Albuquerque, N.M.
Menaul, co-created an outreach program for at-risk children. Through Follow in our Footsteps, the school's 52-member student council plans activities involving nearby children in need of positive role models. The student council raised $5,000 for projects such as a shoe drive for the needy and a haunted house Halloween party for 100 at-risk children. ★

COMPUTER TRAINING

AARON SOTO
Picacho Middle School
Las Cruces, N.M.
Aaron provided technical computer support and training to educators at his school. He trained the teachers during a four-day instructional session, which took more than 60 hours to prepare for. He was been appointed by the State Board of Education to the Council on Technology in Education for a four-year term representing all of New Mexico's public school students. Aaron also gave a technical presentation at the Southern New Mexico Technology Conference this fall. ★

MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY

DEREK MILLER
Wickford Middle School
North Kingstown, R.I.
Derek played a major role in his community's Make a Difference Day. He helped advertise and plan the event, which included a drive for food, toys, and clothing, along and community clean-up project. The items collected were given to various charities, including the American Red Cross and the North Kingstown Food Pantry. ★

JUNE EXPERIENCE

CAROLINE HELMS
Irmo Middle School
Columbia, S.C.
Caroline volunteered for the American Red Cross. She started volunteering through a Red Cross project called June Experience, which gave students the opportunity to work with several different agencies after school in the spring. After June Experience ended, Caroline continued at the Red Cross, working eight-hour days typing, copying, answering phones, and helping where needed. ★

CHURCH CHOIR VOLUNTEER

AMY JOHNSON
Essex High School
Essex Junction, Vt.
Amy volunteered to take over her church's junior choir when the church council decided it could no longer afford a paid director. Since then, the choir has grown from 8 to 32 members, and won increased parental involvement and support. As a result of Amy's work, the church council has decided to train another youth to replace her when she goes to college. ★

ALL AROUND VOLUNTEER

ERIN DOUBLE
Suncrest Middle School
Morgantown, W.Va.
Erin actively participated in several volunteer projects. She took part in a mission trip to Paterson, N.J., to raise money for Habititat for Humanity and fasted for 30 hours to raise money for starving children. Once a week, Erin worked as a candy striper at a nearby hospital, answering phones, escorting patients to the emergency room and making X-ray jackets. ★

FUNDRAISING FOR AT-RISK BABIES

LAUREN GRINER
Brookstone School
Columbus, Ga.
Lauren raised nearly $30,000 to support the March of Dimes since she became an advocate at the young age of 8 for at-risk babies. Lauren initiated her own fund-raising campaign with a mailing list of almost 250 supporters, gathered a team of walkers from her school, and motivated numerous corporate teams by sharing her fund-raising tips. The March of Dimes in return recognized Lauren with its Volunteer Mission Award, and appointed her the Youth Chairperson for its Columbus, Georgia chapter. Lauren was named the number one Youth Walker in Georgia for three years in a row due to the funds she has raised. ★

INTERNATIONAL KIDS KARE-USA

AMY CADA
Downers Grove South High School
Downers Grove, Ill.
Amy launched an organization called International Kids Kare-USA to promote teen volunteerism as a memorial to her best friend, who died of cancer. After years of searching for a way to honor her friend's memory, Amy heard of a national recycling campaign to collect pop tops to benefit Ronald McDonald houses across the country. Amy decided that she would supplement the Ronald McDonald house campaign with her own campaign targeted at teens. She started small by initiating the program in her own school. Success at that level took Amy to the school district, and to the state association of student councils, and eventually nationwide. International Kids Kare-USA provided a ten-page how-to kit, a monthly newsletter and a website, all coordinated by Amy. ★

KIDS ENGAGED IN YOUTH SERVICES (KEYS)

LINDSAY WASIK
Elkhart Memorial High School
Elkhart, Ind.
Lindsey struggled for three long years to gain support for Kids Engaged in Youth Services (KEYS), a publication she felt would make it easier for interested kids to identify volunteer opportunities. The concept for KEYS came to Lindsay when she was inspired by a friend to volunteer with the Make-A-Wish Foundation. When that experience did not turn out as she hoped, Lindsay called the governor's office to learn of additional organizations that might need her help. Frustrated by the response she received, Lindsay almost gave up. Lindsay felt a publication filled with all the information and

PROMOTING VOLUNTEERISM

resources a teen would need to decide how and where to volunteer would solve the problem. After years of trying to persuade various government officials to approve KEYS, Lindsay finally got the support she needed from the City of Elkhart, which funded the printing of the publication and made it available in community and school libraries, and through youth and government organizations. ★

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWSPAPER —BY KIDS AND FOR KIDS

JASON CROWE
A home-schooled child
Newburgh, Ind.
Jason created a neighborhood newspaper "By Kids and For Kids" in memory of his grandmother, who had lost her battle with cancer. With his parents' help, Jason wrote and designed a prototype, knocked on doors, and wrote countless letters to recruit stories and sell subscriptions. Interest in his newspaper grew and Jason had subscribers in 17 states and 3 foreign countries. In addition, Jason used his newspaper to spread the word about a cellist from Sarajevo who was trying to encourage an end to war through the harmony of his music. ★

TEEN CORE— GROUP VOLUNTEERISM

ANDREW GAWRYCH
Leavenworth High School
Leavenworth, Kansas
Andrew turned a simple idea into a student-run, teen volunteer organization, Teen Core, whose members have contributed hundreds of hours to community service. Andrew's realization that his school did not offer any structured forum for volunteer opportunities inspired the initial concept of Teen Core. He created his own group and served as President without adult guidance through which teens could help themselves by helping others. Andrew believed volunteering is always more fun and appealing when done in groups. From bell-ringing for the Salvation Army to assisting Reading is Fundamental, Teen Core's members have lent their helping hands to various organizations in need. ★

STUDENTS TAKING ACTION TO REACH SOCIETY (STARS)

MEGAN BOHANNON
Eastern High School
Louisville, K.Y.
Megan founded Students Taking Action to Reach Society (STARS), a service-oriented group that not only helped those in need but offered students inspirational activities to keep them away from drugs. With her adviser's help, Meg recruited more than 70 fellow classmates to participate in a number of service projects, which she coordinated. STARS conducted a 24-hour fast to raise money to purchase food to benefit the homeless. A coat collection followed, which yielded over 150 used coats for the poor, coats for which Meg arranged free dry cleaning with a local business owner. ★

PLAYS FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN

PHILANA OMOROTIONMWAN
Glasgow Middle School
Baton Rouge, La.
Philana coordinated and performed in a series of plays for elementary school children at five area libraries during her summer break. These theater projects gave Philana the opportunity to meet new people and recruit them to participate in the plays, and brush up on her organizational skills. In addition to selecting the plays, Philana built the sets, coordinated costumes, and promoted the free performances, which helped to entertain young kids while school was not in session. ★

GIVING AND LEARNING OUR WAY (GLOW) YOUTH VOLUNTEERS

BECCA LAPTOOK
J.J. Pearce High School
Richardson, Texas
Becca initiated Giving and Learning Our Way (GLOW) Youth Volunteers, a program which offered teens an outlet to socialize with others while performing community service. Becca and her younger sister managed the group. Over 55 area non-profit organizations have benefited from GLOW's volunteer work, including hospitals, shelters and food banks. Becca received a state charter for GLOW Youth Volunteers and arranged for the group's non-profit status.. Becca learned that there are many children and adults in the world who need help, and that there are many good teenagers who are very happy to provide that help. ★

VOLUNTEER MATCH

ANDREA KNOLL
William Fremd High School-Palatine
Barrington, Ill.
Andrea served as the Chicago area's community outreach coordinator for VolunteerMatch, a world wide web site that lists volunteering opportunities throughout the country. Andrea, who was always been active in her community, searched the VolunteerMatch web site for volunteer opportunities in the Chicago area and was surprised to find that Chicago was not listed. The organization's director informed Andrea that a volunteer coordinator was needed to get the Chicago area on-line, and that led to Andrea's current commitment to VolunteerMatch. On a weekly basis, Andrea prepared and distributed VolunteerMatch information packets to at least 15 non-profit organizations who may have been in need of volunteers. Andrea educated interested organizations in how to post volunteer opportunities on VolunteerMatch, and actually handled the posting for others. She actively recruited other students to join her effort. ★

DISASTER RELIEF

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Ortonville High School
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Mark led a team of disaster-relief volunteers in helping victims of a devastating tornado five hours away in the town of St. Peter. After hearing about the tornado, Mark sprang into action to recruit volunteers, arrange transportation, and secure donations of money and supplies. He placed announcements on the local radio station and at his high school, held planning meetings, and contacted parents and teachers for their assistance. Mark's goal of 25 volunteers and $500 in donations was surpassed when 52 volunteers donated their time and $1,500 was raised to support the project. ★

NEW HOPE GOSPEL CHOIR

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New Hope Middle School
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Shannon created and directed the New Hope Gospel Choir to enable young students to develop their singing talents and share fellowship. Shannon, who has sung in many choirs and feels the experiences have had a positive influence on his life, wanted to show others his age how to benefit from choir membership. He also wanted to increase school spirit and make his community proud of

PROMOTING VOLUNTEERISM

the accomplishments of its youth. To ensure that there was enough interest, Shannon surveyed his school, and then encouraged the support of his principal and identified a faculty sponsor. In addition to his position as choir director, Shannon served as minister of music, which involved arranging and teaching music selections to choir members. ★

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM

HOLLI COLEMAN
Mark Twain High School-Center
Perry, Mo.
Holli founded her school's first community service program and recruited 200 of the school's 300 students to participate in activities that benefited more than 400 organizations and individuals. Having been exposed to community service through her 4-H council for the past 10 years, Holli wanted to share with her peers at Mark Twain High School the joy she received from helping others. To accomplish this, Holli first created a list of goals and brainstormed ideas for service projects that would appeal to the entire student body, then contacted her student council advisor who recommended she draw up a constitution with program guidelines. She involved students, teachers, and board members in the process to gain additional insights, and proposed the complete program to her principal. Her program participants have wrapped presents for underprivileged children, visited nursing homes, participated in the Adopt-A-Highway Program, and worked with children in Head Start. ★

A COMMUNITY PLANNING AND REPORT BOOK

JEFFREY WALKER
Green Valley High School
Henderson, Nev.
Jeffrey founded 2000 Tomorrows, a program designed to inspire high school students to create service projects that meet community needs. Jeff wrote a 34-page Planning and Report Book, which detailed how to assess community needs, develop appropriate service projects, recruit students to volunteer, and implement the projects, and he sent it to Class of 2000 presidents at all schools in southern Nevada. As a result, more than 6,000 high school students participated the first year in projects involving battered women's shelters, abused children, drug abuse prevention, teen pregnancy, clothing drives, and environmental clean-ups. Jeff coordinated a celebration at the end of the year and presented awards to participating schools. His program was so successful that the Nevada Association of Student Councils and U.S. Bank pledged their support. ★

ENVIRONMENTAL EXTRAVAGANZA

BEN MOORE
Oquirrh Hills Middle School
Riverton, Utah
Ben organized a variety of schoolwide activities to engage his school's student body in community service projects. As student council president, he organized a two-week challenge for students to collectively render 1,000 hours of volunteer service, a campaign that collected more than 500 family videos for a children's medical center, and a fund-raising drive that produced more than $600 for the Leukemia Society of America. He also coordinated an environmental extravaganza to raise awareness among fellow students about important environmental issues. ★

A PRESIDENT'S SUMMIT

SCOTT SACHS
Kempsville High School
Scott played a lead role in mobilizing his area to address the needs of young people, in response to the President's Summit for America's Future. Scott was the only youth in the Virginia Beach delegation to the 1997 summit in Philadelphia, and when he returned, he helped found the South Hampton Roads Alliance for Youth (SHRAY). A few months later, he co-chaired the Mayors' Regional Youth Celebration Summit, an event that drew 400 young people to help determine the needs of local youth. He then helped plan and host another local summit to identify government and corporate resources that could create more opportunities for young people. Scott had to learn about government processes, attend countless meetings, solicit donations, work on logistics, and perform many other tasks. When the events were over, the mayors of several cities in the Hampton Roads area and SHRAY had a plan of action to serve 35,000 local youth by the year 2000. ★

MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY

BROOKE LACY
Eastmont Junior High School
East Wenatchee, Wash.
Brooke organized a Make A Difference Day project at her school that collected nearly 2,000 stuffed animals for community service organizations to give to traumatized children. Brooke started by proposing the idea to her vice principal and several teachers, and then persuaded her student government to make the project the school's official Make A Difference Day activity. Brooke designed posters and made announcements to promote the project, and organized competitions among homeroom classes to boost donations. She had hoped to collect a thousand stuffed animals from her 900 fellow students, but ended up with twice that many. With help from a school committee she formed, and her family and neighbors, Brooke sorted, cleaned and repaired her stuffed animals, and then delivered them to organizations such as Child Protection Services, the fire department, the first aid squad, and the police department. ★

STUDENTS FOR A HEALTHY COMMUNITY

REBECCA MCINTYRE
Buffalo High School
Buffalo, Wyo.
Rebecca created and presides over Students for a Healthy Community, a service group intended to inspire teens to make a difference. As youth ambassador for the statewide Healthy Communities-Healthy Youth campaign, run by adults, Rebecca felt an approach involving more young people was necessary for success. She wanted to provide interesting, fun and varied opportunities for all types of students. Since last March, Rebecca rallied support for her group from 80 fellow students, who later elected her president. Rebecca led the group in more than 30 projects to date, including a Power for Youth Fair, at which national speakers addressed over 900 students on self-esteem, leadership, managing anger, and avoiding drugs. Students for a Healthy Community also enlisted 200 area youth in the annual Big Help Day, sponsored a May Day celebration at an area elderly care center, and is coordinating a senior citizen dance. To fund the group's work, Rebecca applied for and received nearly $2,000 in grant funds. ★

Assisting Senior Citizens

ASSISTED-LIVING/NURSING HOME NEWSPAPER

GABRIELLE WILLIS
West Anchorage High School
Anchorage AK
Gabrielle volunteered her services to the Mukluk, a newspaper for residents of the Anchorage Pioneer's Home, an assisted-living/nursing facility. Working as editor, reporter, photographer and graphic designer, she volunteered over 500 hours in a single year to produce 12 issues. When the publication ran out of funds, she raised over $700 from local businesses and organizations to keep it going. ★

COMPANION FOR A 90-YEAR-OLD WOMAN

AIMEE LEE
Lindoln Hall Middle School
Lincolnwood, Ill.
Aimee volunteered her time to help a 90-year-old woman in her community who suffered from Alzheimer's disease. By keeping her company and assisting-and relieving-her primary caretaker, Aimee helped keep the woman out of an institution for an extended period and helped her make the transition to a nursing home when it was no longer possible to care for her in her own home. ★

VOLUNTEER AT A LOCAL NURSING HOME

JENNA BROWN
Barrett Traditional Middle School
Louisville, Ky.
Jenna volunteers year-round at a local nursing home. During the summer and school breaks, she is there daily. Jenna helps with games and activities, delivers mail to the residents, and helps with book-keeping and clerical duties. Nominated by her co-workers at the nursing home, Jenna was named Teen Volunteer of the Year by the Kentucky Healthcare Facilities Fall Conference. ★

ADOPT-A-GRANDPARENT PROGRAM

KELLIE TYLER
Fannie C. Williams Middle School
New Orleans, La.
Kellie participated in her school's Adopt-a-Grandparent program. Once a month, she and other volunteer members of her school choir go to a local nursing home, sing for its residents, lead them in songs and hand exercises, and give each resident a basket of gifts. Kellie helped put the gift baskets together. ★

STORIES AND POEMS

KRISTYN NORDFORS
Brewer MS
Brewer, Maine
Kristyn visits a local nursing home each week and reads stories and poems to its residents. Kristyn also organizes arts and crafts nights and other activities for the home, moving the elderly residents to get out of their rooms to socialize. Kristyn has inspired other students to look into similar type activities. ★

CHRISTMAS EVENT

SARAH SCHOFIELD
Gilbert H. Hood MS
Derry, N.H.
Sarah participated in a Christmas event at a local nursing home. Sarah and several of her peers at her church's Sunday school went to the nursing home with gift baskets and sang Christmas carols for its residents. Other trips were planned after the success of the group's first effort. ★

SENIOR PROM

JESSICA SCHMIDT
Minot High School Magic City Campus
Minot, N.D.
Jessica worked with nursing homes in her community as president of her school's Key Club to establish relationships between their residents and the students in her school. She helped organize a nostalgic Senior's Prom at her school for local senior citizens and arranged student visits and activities at the local nursing home. ★

UNIQUE BIRTHDAY CARDS

JENNY HUGHES
Finn Hill Junior High School
Kirkland, Wash.

Jenny created unique birthday cards for seniors at the Des Moines Senior Center. After hearing that some of the seniors were receiving used birthday cards with old names whited-out, Jenny decided to make personalized cards on her computer for each of the seniors herself. Each month Jenny made 75 customized birthday cards. ★

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NURSING HOME VISITS AND PERFORMANCES

Matthew Pangrac
Appleseed School
Decatur, Ill.

Matthew coordinated monthly visits and performances at a local nursing home that were once led by his local 4-H group. Over time, 4-H participation was so low that the nursing home was going to cut the visiting program. Matt remembered how much the seniors liked to talk to and visit with the kids, so he volunteered to be a junior leader and took responsibility for organizing visits and encouraging people to come. During the year, the themes of Matt's visits were: My Family Tree; Small Pet Day; You Are Loved; Picture This; and Outside In. Matt promoted his visits through his school newsletter to encourage more participation, and lead meetings with participants to discuss overcoming fears of visiting with the sick and elderly. ★

IF I CAN SEE, I CAN READ

Sarra Cherry
Menaul School
Albuquerque, N.M.

Sarra transformed a science project about eyesight into an in-depth service activity involving the collection of unused eyeglasses and donated books to benefit those who cannot afford either. Sarra's program, If I Can See, I Can Read, was created when she learned about a literate tribe in Indonesia that did not have access to eyeglasses for the tribe's elderly members. Sarra wrote letters to groups and businesses asking for donations of unused eyeglasses. While doing so, she realized there was a similar need right in her own community. Through her campaign, Sarra was able to send hundreds of eyeglasses and books to the needy elderly in Indonesia and in her Albuquerque. ★

ADOPT-A-RETIREMENT-CENTER PROGRAM

Sarah Bonady
Wynne Junior High School
Wynne, Ark.

Sarah served as the founder and coordinator of her 4-H club's Adopt-a-Retirement-Center program. The idea for the program came to her while visiting a friend at a local retirement center. Other residents joined Sarah and her friend while they played a game of checkers, and Sarah realized that all of the residents at the center might enjoy regular visits and activities. She convinced her 4-H club to participate, and then began to coordinate fashion shows, holiday visits with Santa, craft activities, and outdoor planting projects. ★

NURSING HOME VOLUNTEER

Allison Presley
Memorial Middle School
Conyers, Ga.

Allison served as an active junior volunteer at her grandmother's nursing home. When her grandmother, who suffers from Alzheimer's Disease, could no longer communicate with her, Allison was so distraught that she turned to other grandmothers and grandfathers at the home. She began simply befriending these other residents during her regular visits with her grandmother, and after two years, Allison became a valued member of the volunteer

staff at the home. She participated in an Alzheimer's support group, the nursing home's family council, and was a team member in the annual Memory Walk for Alzheimer's. She also coordinated various activities for the residents, including musical and dance productions, and assisted them with their personal care needs. She convinced many of her friends to volunteer at the home, and join her in bake sales and other fundraisers that Allison sponsors. ★

NURSING HOME ACTIVITIES

KELLY LINDQUIST
Lytton Community School
Lytton, Iowa

Kelly made weekly visits to a local nursing home where she conducted activities for the residents. During trips to the home with her mother, a nurse, Kelly realized that many residents never received company. So, she began visiting regularly and offering her companionship to the residents. She played cards and bingo with the residents, brought along her pet dog and kittens to entertain them, and assisted in various activities. Kelly raised money to fund the purchase of holiday gifts for the residents, and created a bird aviary at the nursing home. In addition to her service at the nursing home, Kelly volunteered for her community in other ways, such as participation in the Crop Walk for hunger, helped an elderly neighbor with outside chores, and volunteered at the county fair. ★

SENIOR CITIZEN PROM

MINDI KIMP
Hamilton High School in Hamilton
Corvallis, Mont.

Mindi coordinated a senior citizen prom the night before her high school prom for seniors living in Missoula and Ravalli counties. Mindi, a 4-H member and junior class president, enjoys a very close relationship with her grandparents. While planning her high school prom, the idea of hosting one for senior citizens struck her as a great way to honor grandparents and help restore their faith in today's younger generation. In addition to convincing the student council that it was a worthwhile cause, Mindi had to work closely with the local Council on Aging for its input and assistance. Determined that no senior citizen would be charged to attend, Mindi solicited donations for prizes, decorations, and flowers so that every lady would receive a rose. She promoted the event through local newspapers and radio stations, and hired a local band to play big band music. The event was so successful that Mindi was been asked to speak at the State Student Council Convention to advise others on how to plan a senior citizen prom.

MUSICAL PERFORMANCES AT NURSING HOMES

PAMELA CRUZ
Bosque Preparatory School
Albuquerque, N.Mex.

Pamela visited the residents of a local nursing home and arranged entertaining activities for them twice a week. Pamela knew from her mother, a nurse, that the elderly were often forgotten. At first, she found it difficult to gain the residents' trust, so Pamela worked hard at simply showing affection to all the residents on her regular visits. As time went on, she arranged musical performances and skits for the residents' enjoyment, often involving other members of her family. Pamela has visited the home for nearly three years and plans to continue. She also recruited fellow students to volunteer by sharing her positive experiences with friends and classmates. ★

THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

MICHELLE TURBIN
Lincoln High School
Wisconsin Rapids, Wis.

Michelle created The Night Before Christmas, a program that brings children into nearby retirement homes on Christmas Eve to spread the joy of the holiday. While volunteering at a nursing home during the holiday season, Michelle noticed that many residents were lonely and depressed, and seemed to particularly miss the pleasure of having children around. Wanting to help, Michelle recruited 140 fellow students to each bring a young child on Christmas Eve visits to six nursing homes, where they sang carols, handed out Christmas cards and visited with the residents. She also brought along a Santa Claus and a piano player.

A GRANDDAUGHTER FOR ALL

SARAH RUDOFF
Monroe Middle School
Green River, Wyo.

Sarah volunteered three times a week at an assisted care facility in town where her grandfather was once a resident. During her regular visits with her grandfather, Sarah got to know many of the other residents so well that even after her grandfather left the facility, she continued visiting. In addition to simply passing the time with the residents and other simple tasks, Sarah encouraged friends to help her with a variety of special activities such as Halloween jack-o-lanterns, Christmas tree trimming and more. ★

"I learned that even the smallest things can make the biggest differences in the world and I was reminded how precious life is."

LAUREN KULEY

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Promoting Health and Safety

EMT

CHRIS JOHNSON
Smyrna High School
Smyrna, Del.
Chris served as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) for the Smyrna Volunteer American Legion Ambulance Service. Although the youngest EMT ever to serve Smyrna and neighboring Clayton, Chris received the highest score in his class on the fire school exam. He volunteers 12 hours per week, has been on more than 450 ambulance calls. ★

A BICYCLE SAFETY CLASS FOR CHILDREN

MATTHEW IWAMOTO
Guion Creek Middle School
Indianapolis, Ind.
Matthew worked with Riley Hospital for Children to create a bicycle safety class for children, including the handicapped. Matthew designed a training program to show children how to ride safely around cars, animals and other hazards. Matthew's program, using interactive games and indoor and outdoor training, was offered in other locations. ★

OUR HOUSE

ANNE NEWMAN
Neville High School
Monroe La.
Anne organized a group of students in her school to spend a day at Our House, a home for teenage runaways. Anne and the other students transformed an unkempt house into a clean and pleasant place--painting portions of the house, cleaning up its yard and spending time with its residents. Anne continued as an active volunteer by working with GOCARE and World Aids Day. ★

STAND AGAINST AIDS

ELIZABETH GRUVER
Hopkins High School
Minnetonka, Minn.
Elizabeth worked with AIDS awareness and education in her school. She helped her school raise money for the Magic Johnson Stand Against AIDS, spoke to her classmates in assemblies, planned special events, and worked towards creating a special student panel to educate middle school students about AIDS. ★

TEENS EDUCATED TO COMBAT AIDS (TECA)

KELLI MILLER
Millard North High School
Omaha Nebr.
Kelli formed Teens Educated to Combat AIDS (TECA), a group of students dedicated to educating their peers about the AIDS virus. Kelli gave speeches on AIDS-related topics to area schools, juvenile diversion programs, and various community groups. She ran TECA's hotline and participated in the National Youth Summit on HIV Education and Prevention in Washington, D.C. in 1995. ★

KIDS CAN!

LAUREN GAFFNEY
Govenor Livingston Regional High School
Berkeley Heights, N.J.
Lauren formed Kids CAN! (The Kids Care AIDS Network) to help raise money and awareness to combat AIDS. Lauren designed a special Kids CAN! version of the AIDS ribbon, sold through Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS (which features it on the first anti-AIDS kids holiday greeting card). Lauren also published a newsletter and worked with her peers nationwide. ★

VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN

VICKI PRAUTZSCH
Hill City High School
Hill City, S.D.
Vicki served as a volunteer Emergency Medical Technician (EMT). Vicki completed a 150-hour EMT course and started volunteering with her local volunteer ambulance crew. On three of her school's athletic teams, Vicki helped treat injured athletes at her school's sporting events. In addition to responding to emergency calls in her community, she assisted on the state testing team in Rapid City. ★

PROMOTING HEALTH AND SAFETY

CHRISTMAS DINNER THEATER

TRICIA GEYER
Milford High School
Milford, Del.
Tricia organized a Christmas dinner theater for senior citizens. She persuaded local businesses to purchase $60 tables, which provided a turkey dinner, a play, music, and dancing. She began planning four months in advance for the event, which was held at her school and attended by 162 local senior citizens. ★

ELDERLY VOLUNTEER

BENJAMIN FISKE
Edmund Burke School
Washington, D.C.
Benjamin volunteered at the Presbyterian Home for the elderly for five years, providing a variety of services such as transporting residents, preparing food, answering telephones, helping the nurses, and offering companionship to anyone in need. He arranged for middle and high school students to spend a volunteer day once a year at the home. ★

SENIOR CITIZEN ASSISTANCE

JOSEPH TORDELLA
Shore Regional High School
West Long Branch, N.J.
Joseph helped care for, teach, feed, and assist senior citizens in his community. He provided administrative support to Senior Citizens Activities Network, answering phones, organizing events and teaching a senior citizen's typing class. In addition, Tordella transported residents and prepared and served meals at the Peter Cooper Village housing complex every Sunday. ★

GREETING CARD PROGRAM

JILL FEYEREISEN
Gregory Middle School
Gregory, S.D.
Jill created personalized greeting cards for the residents of Rosebud Nursing Home. She started doing this when she learned that some residents were not receiving birthday or get-well cards. Jill keeps a running list of the residents' birthdays and makes frequent visits to the home. Now all residents receive birthday cards and get-well cards if they are ill. ★

VOLUNTEEN

ANDRE BEAULIEU
Moanalua Intermediate School
Honolulu, Hawaii
Andre performed medical service for the American Red Cross Volunteen program at the Makalapa Clinic on the Pearl Harbor Naval Base. He dispatched ambulances, sets up electrocardiograms, answered telephones, and tracked patients' progress. Andre spent the summer working 34 hours a week at the clinic. ★

THE DANGERS OF SMOKING

DEREK SWIERCZEK
William Fremd High School
Palatine, Ill.
Derek campaigned to have all cigarette vending machines removed from his town to help prevent underage smoking. After he succeeded, Derek was invited to join the American Lung Association in a protest against smoking at the Democratic National Convention. ★

CHILD SUPERVISION

HEATHER TRAVERS
Oxford Hills Middle School
South Paris, Maine
Heather supervised children on early-release days and during school vacations at The Child Health Center for the past two years. She played games with the 5- to 12-year-olds and helped organize arts-and-crafts activities. ★

LIFESAVING FIRE EQUIPMENT

CORY SNYDER
St. Pius X
Bowie, Md.
Cory ran a campaign that raised over $25,000 to buy a piece of lifesaving equipment for the Bowie fire department. While watching a feature on NBC's "Dateline," he learned about the Infrared Imaging System (IRIS), which helps firefighters see through smoke to find people. Snyder spent nearly five months organizing a raffle, writing and giving speeches, obtaining media coverage, and requesting donations. His campaign was successful, making Bowie only the second town in Maryland to own the equipment. ★

MAJORITY OVER BUTTS

EMILY FISCHER
Chariho Regional High School
Wood River Junction, R.I.
Emily organized a student group called Majority Over Butts (M.O.B.) to keep cigarette smoking out of the school environment. As part of her effort, Emily organized a rally, attended by over 650 students, the superintendent and several school officials to encourage a more stringent school smoking policy. Today, due in large to Emily's work, her school has one of the toughest smoking policies in Rhode Island. ★

TEENS AGAINST PREGNANCY

ADRIEN LOPEZ
Valdez High School
Valdez, Ark.
Adrien established Teens Against Pregnancy to educate young girls about the challenges of being a teen mother. Adrien was motivated by a number of her own friends who dropped out of school to care for their children. In an attempt to take this important message out of the formal health-education setting, Adrien decided to host a series of eye-opening panels featuring young moms. She worked in tandem with her counselor, health teacher, and a local counseling center to build support for this controversial program among both the school administration and parents. Adrien secured the participation of teen moms and presented four panels to eighth and ninth grade students. ★

SAFETY AWARENESS FOR CHILDREN

RAFAEL CORONA
Van Buren Central Middle School
Van Buren, Ariz.
Rafael wrote and performed in a safety skit that was seen by nearly 3,000 young children and parents. Rafael's project was initially prepared for a local safety contest. After winning first place in the

PROMOTING HEALTH AND SAFETY

contest, Rafael was asked if he would help spread safety awareness by presenting the skit to children throughout the community. Rafael performed the skit at five area elementary schools, several churches, and various community events. Nearly 3,000 children and their parents were exposed to important safety messages about being home alone, answering the telephone, and talking to strangers. ★

BUCKLEBEAR SEATBELT PROGRAM

SARA MCDONNALL
Lamar High School
Lamar, Colo.
Sara educated over 1,000 preschoolers and kindergarten students about seat belt safety through her creative Bucklebear program. Even though parents are legally responsible to properly restrain their children, that job is made much easier when the children are eager to comply. When Sara was a child, her babysitter, who was not buckled, died in a car accident. Sara searched for a way to make a difference, which she found through a 4-H preschool seat belt program. Sara took that concept and expanded upon it when she constructed a lap puppet she called, Bucklebear. She approached elementary school principals and teachers across her county and began to schedule appearances carefully setting aside time that did not conflict with her own school attendance. Sara brought along Bucklebear, coloring books, a special message for parents, and a certificate for each student. ★

TRAINING IN SANITATION

KIARA DIGGS
Benjamin Banneker Academic High School
Washington, D.C.
Kiara spent a month in San Isidro, Mexico, volunteering with the Amigos de la Americas organization to help the residents of this rural Mexican village design and construct latrines and to educate them on sanitary habits. Along with 63 other volunteers, Kiara attended a series of mandatory training sessions and retreats to prepare her with the necessary skills for the project. Though trained in Spanish, Kiara found it difficult and frustrating to understand the residents of San Isidro, and was often disturbed by the unsanitary conditions she lived under while there. She overcame these minor frustrations as she realized how important her volunteer work was to them. ★

BOOKS AND MORE

STEPHANIE JACKSON
Boyd County Middle School
Ashland, Ky.
Stephanie initiated a variety of service projects to help those in need. Her first project was a drive to collect unused books which she then donated to the local chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. The books made their way to area Veterans Hospitals for patients to enjoy. Stephanie also volunteered at a local hospital where she helped the nursing units by making a variety of charts that make their jobs easier. Finally, Stephanie distributed over 400 plastic trays to school teachers who use them for storage and science projects. ★

SAFE DRINKING WATER - SPLASH

JODI HARPER
Northwest High School
Grand Island, N.E.
Jodi developed a board game to teach people about water protection and to encourage citizens to do all they can to protect the supply of safe drinking water. Her interest grew into a full-fledged effort to help promote water protection as an active volunteer with the Groundwater Foundation. Jodi's board game, Splash, was conceived when she realized that thousands of teens were not able to attend the annual Children's Groundwater Festival, an event for which Jodi delivered numerous speeches and participated in various workshops. She was determined to reach kids who could not attend the festival with the message of water conservation in a way that was fun and easy. Jodi designed her board game from a national perspective, leading players across the United States through a series of water-related questions. Jodi completed the final prototype of Splash and made it available to schools through the Groundwater Festival. The Groundwater Foundation named Jodi's board game the outstanding groundwater project in the country. ★

TEACHING SWIMMING

MOIRA DELAHANTY
Hooksett Memorial Middle School
Hooksett, N.H.
Moira volunteered as an aide to a swimming instructor with the local chapter of the American Red Cross. Once Moira had advanced in her own lessons, she realized she wanted to help younger kids overcome their fear of the water. She completed a special training session and volunteered for one month over the course of two summers. Moira worked with children as young as 15 months old, and was proud to have a hand in teaching them to swim and enjoy the water. ★

AN ON CALL EMERGENCY PROGRAM

DANIEL WEBBER
Central High School
Grand Forks, N.D.
Daniel fought the raging flood waters of the Red River as a coordinator for thousands of student volunteers who helped fill and pile sandbags, make sandwiches for volunteers, and monitor the dikes. Working closely with the United Way, the superintendent of schools, the fire chief and others, Daniel devised an on-call system that would deploy teams of 25 students in 4-hour shifts as needed. Daniel got the word out to interested students, coordinated a parent permission slip process, and organized student teams in a computer database. Daniel whose idea for a network of student volunteers grew out of an Eagle Scout project. Close to 2,000 students volunteered, contributing over 31,000 hours toward the effort to help save the city of Grand Forks from the raging river. The Red River eventually won the battle, but the efforts of the student volunteers helped delay the flood to provide time for residents to evacuate. ★

HEALTH AND SAFETY CONCERNS OF TEENAGERS

ROBERT LYNCH
Gotha Middle School
Windermere, Orlando, Fla.
Robert conducted a health and safety information campaign at his school that reached more than 1,600 students and hundreds of teachers and par-

PROMOTING HEALTH AND SAFETY

ents. The idea for his Health & Safety Concerns of Teenagers campaign came after Robert attended a family information fair with his parents. He realized the importance of being informed on topics such as drugs, date violence and Internet safety, but realized this information wouldn't do much good unless it reached the people who needed it. Robert set out to give his peers the information they needed to make educated choices, gathered health and safety information from a variety of public and private agencies and then distributed it to students, teachers and parents. Robert also staffed information tables at his school's student orientation night and parent open house. ★

AIDS ACTIVISM

ALLISON WIGNALL
Newton Senior High School
Newton, Iowa

Allison has served as an active, outspoken activist on AIDS awareness and prevention since she was just 12 years old, when an adult friend contracted the disease. Her friend, who performed with Allison in a local theater group, encouraged her to perform at the All-Iowa AIDS Benefit, which prompted her to continue with AIDS awareness activities after her friend died. She works with the AIDS Project of Central Iowa, and served as honorary chairperson of its annual fund-raising campaign. She also organized a benefit concert for an Illinois teenage AIDS sufferer, recorded an album featuring a song about AIDS, spoke to the news media about AIDS prevention, distributed red ribbons, and performed at many AIDS benefits. Her personal fund-raising efforts have brought in more than $320,000 to benefit Iowans living with AIDS and HIV. ★

NATIONAL SKATE PATROL

PATRICK CROSS
Mississippi Horizons School in Brainerd
Baxter, Minn.

Patrick founded the Brainerd/Baxter City chapter of the National Skate Patrol after government agencies created 50 miles of trails for a skateboard park. He got the idea from his father, who was a member of a ski safety patrol unit. Patrick first sought support from the area police department and city council, then secured a charter from the National Skate Patrol. Although most chapters are found only in large metropolitan areas, Patrick convinced the group that a skate patrol was needed in his area, and Brainerd became the smallest community to receive a charter. Patrick recruited both youth and adult roller bladers to volunteer, and arranged for the training and testing of the patrol unit. He also encouraged local cell phone companies to donate phones for the patrol. It took Patrick a year to get the Brainerd/Baxter City National Skate Patrol off the ground. ★

SAFE FOOD HANDLING PRACTICES

JESSICA WARREN
Clarkton School of Discovery
Elizabethtown, N.C.

Jessica worked hard to educate people about the food they eat. Media stories about E-Coli bacteria and food-borne illness sparked Jessica's interest in food safety. She researched information about food poisoning and food-handling practices, and then put together a presentation with posters and props for delivery to 300 fellow students, an at-risk youth group, two summer camp workshops and 120 youth at a farm safety camp. In addition, Jessica created a poison-lookalike display for a farm safety day camp. ★

A SMOKE FREE ENVIRONMENT

KIMBERLY PETTERSEN
Minot High School
Minot, N.Dak.

Kimberly launched a public relations campaign to promote a smoke-free environment in her community and throughout North Dakota. Troubled by the number of people who die from smoking-related causes each year, Kimberly set out last May to make everyone aware of the dangers of cigarettes and second-hand smoke. She delivered presentations with North Dakota's First Lady to more than 5,000 students and adults. She also promoted media coverage, wrote press releases and editorials, and developed newspaper ads and public service announcements. Kimberly sought the support of local and state officials in having November 1998 declared Smoke Free Environment Month. She worked with the American Lung Association and the First District Health Unit to promote and select the winners of poster and billboard contests in the state. ★

"I've come to realize that one person can't do everything, but can always do something that will make a difference."

ERIN CAMPBELL

PREVENTION EDUCATOR

JESSICA MILEY
McDowell High School
Erie, Pa.

Jessica was certified by the Erie County Department of Health as a Prevention Educator to teach students in local high schools and middle schools about preventing HIV and AIDS. Inspired by a community health specialist, Jessica hoped to save the lives of young teens who are at risk. She designed her own programs around topics such as abstinence, sexual risks, peer pressure, self-esteem, and the dangers of drugs and alcohol. Jessica spent twelve to fifteen hours a week on her efforts during the school year, and forty-hour weeks during the summer. ★

FIRE DEPARTMENT VOLUNTEER

BENJAMIN WOMICK
Daniel Morgan Vocational Center
Spartanburg, S.C.

Benjamin helped save three houses from destruction, aided in medical assistance calls, and helped many people injured in accidents as a firefighter with a volunteer fire department. Ben's interest in firefighting began several years ago when his grandfather was severely burned in a gasoline fire. Ben and his cousin helped put the fire out, but his grandfather died a year later from his injuries. He joined the Glenn Springs/Pauline Fire Department and started out as an interior attack commander, and then became the youngest commissioned state fire marshal in South Carolina. He also served as a pump engineer and a medical test responder. Since joining the department, he dedicated an average of two hours a day to his responsibilities, recruited five friends to become firefighters, and signed up for nearly 350 hours of training. ★

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Teaching and Mentoring Other Young People

MATH TUTOR

LIEN BUI
Bell Multicultural High School
Washington, D.C.
Lien tutored mathematics through her school's Comprehensive Math and Science Program. Lien;s first language is Vietnamese, and most of the students she tutored spoke Spanish or English. Despite the language barrier, Lien has helped students develop their mathematical skills and significantly improve their test scores. ★

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

TIFFANY BROWN
Carver Middle School
Monroe, Ga.
Tiffany performed volunteer work for three years with Monroe Elementary's after-school education program. Tiffany, who hopes to be a teacher, helped younger students, kindergarten through fifth grade, with their homework, taught them basic computer skills, helped supervise recreational activities, and helped them iron out problems. ★

THEATER PROGRAM

ARIEL GOLD
Hilo High School
Hilo, Hawaii
Ariel started a theater program for elementary school students with behavioral problems. Ariel worked with the younger students on skits that involved their particular behavioral problem. Through the skits, the children learn more appropriate behavior. Teachers reported that, as a result of Ariel's program, the children's grades improved and fewer behavioral problems occurred. ★

ALOHA UNITED WAY

GAIL UNDAN
Ilima Intermediate School
Ewa Beach Hawaii
Gail Undan organized contests, assemblies, dances, and fundraisers for her school as president of her 800-student class. Among other activities, she planned a special fundraiser for the Aloha United Way. She was also elected co-chairperson for the School Community Base Management Council. ★

HEIFER PROGRAM

JAY HUNT
Tonganoxie High School
Tonganoxie, Kansas
Jay founded and managed the Jay Hunt Annual Heifer Program. Each year, he workd with the 4-H and Future Farmers of America to select one youth to receive a free calf to raise and breed. Jay started the program by donating a calf from his own herd, which he supported by working 30 hours per week after school. Jay required that each winner donate his or her calf's first offspring back to the program. ★

SCIENCE QUEST

BURR SETTLES
Lafayette High School
Lexington, Ky.
Burr started a program to interest younger children in science. Working with his local children's museum, Burr created Science Quest, a series of interactive demonstrations staged like a magic show for elementary students. The program was so successful that Burr was been asked to create a series of videos for area elementary schools. ★

OPERATION IMAGINATION

DONAN ECKLES
Hernando High School
Hernando, Mass.
Donan formed Operation Imagination to encourage younger children to read. Last year, Donan collected 200 used books from her peers and donated them to elementary school libraries to give to children who do not own their own books. She also went to the schools to read stories to the children and to encourage them to read. Donan also collected and distributed games. ★

PROJECT LEARN TOGETHER

AMANDA MOTES
Dell H. Robison Middle School
Las Vegas, Nev.
Amanda helped disabled students at Project Learn Together and the Variety Special Education School in her community. Amanda and other students from her school have worked as one-on-one tutors

with many disabled children, including those who cannot see, hear, or talk. They held their hands, gave them hugs, and helped them with their training and exercise. ★

ONLINE BULLETIN BOARD SERVICE

MARC FREED-FINNEGAN
Glenfield Middle School
Montclair, N.J.
Marc established an electronic online Bulletin Board Service (BBS) to help his classmates track homework assignments. His BBS is available six hours every night, offering newsletters, homework assignments, and class information for sixth-through-eighth grade students. ★

CALLING ALL COLORS

ANISA KINTZ
Whittemore Park Middle School
Conway S.C.
Anisa organized the Calling All Colors conference at Coastal Carolina University. The conference was designed by kids to promote and increase racial unity among young people in grades 3-8. Attendees were encouraged to develop their own plan on how to combat racism. Anisa was invited to speak at a United Nations conference. ★

CREATING A SPECIAL VEHICLE

DANIELLE BUECHLER
Centerville Middle School S
Centerville, S.D.
Danielle created a special vehicle to convey positive messages to her community. Danielle and her brother Steven use singing and ventriloquism to create 10-minute to hour-long skits about AIDS, discrimination, and other social issues. They have performed for over 1,000 people, at schools, teachers workshops, nursing homes, and various community organizations and functions. ★

HELP US GIVE SERVICE CLUB (HUGS)

KATY BALLENGER
Olympus High School
Salt Lake City, Utah
Katy founded the Help Us Give Service club (HUGS) at her school. The club has 123 student members who have performed over 1,200 hours of community service at homeless shelters and nursing homes, and for the March of Dimes, Habitat for Humanity, and other organizations. ★

HOW TO SWIM

AMBER BIRNER
Tomah Middle School
Tomah, Wisc.
Tomah worked as a volunteer teaching very young children to swim at the Warrens Recreation Department. Volunteering three hours a day, four days a week during over three summers. Amber has helped more than 100 small children overcome their fear of the water and learn swimming skills. She also worked with the older youngsters to strengthen their swimming techniques. ★

"Any child can learn to read and open the closed doors of his or her life with a book."

ANDREW ALLSHOUSE

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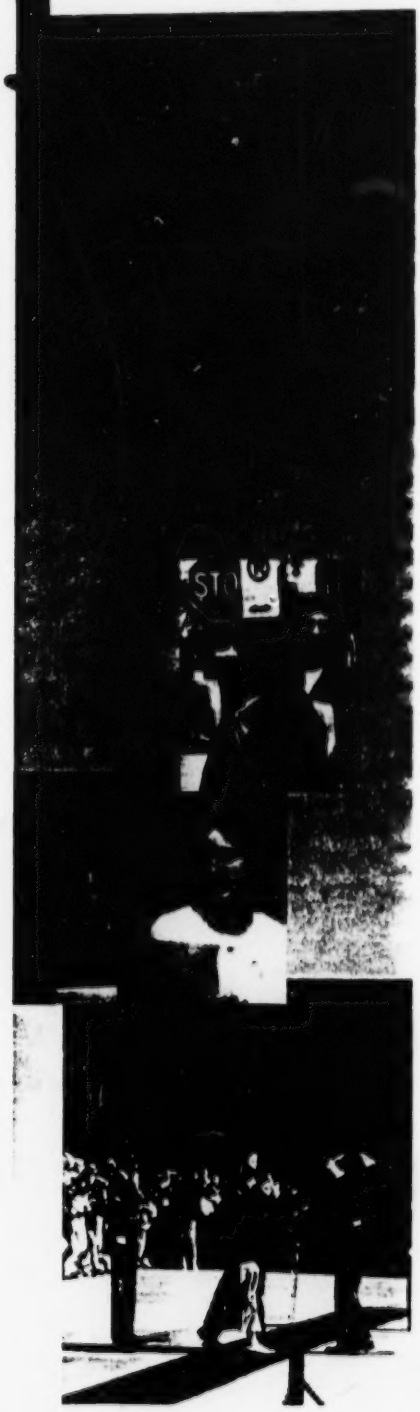
Promoting Citizenship



TEEN LAWYER

ROBERT PURVIS
Coronado Middle School
Tucson, Ariz.
served as a teen lawyer in Tucson's Teen Court, a program in which students participates in sentencing trials for first-time juvenile misdemeanor offenders. Robert spent time during the week and on weekends researching and preparing his cases and meeting with his teenage clients. ★

PROJECT CITIZENSHIP

WILLIAM FLETCHER
Jackson High School
Jackson, Ga.
William educated his community about mosquito control. For his 4-H Entomology and Citizenship project, William wrote and placed news articles, produced flyers and educational materials, gave speeches, and staged exhibits to explain safe methods for controlling his county's mosquito problem. He worked to correct severe drainage problems that aggravated the infestation. ★

CHAIN OF CHARACTER

CARRIE BEEMAN
Mountain View Middle School
Roswell, N.M.
Carrie helped her school win the Chain of Character contest during National Character Counts! Week in October. The contest involved each school selling links in a paper chain to supporters in the community. Carrie made phone calls to local businesses and helped her school sell more than 14,000 chain links. ★

AUTHENTIC NATIVE AMERICAN DANCES

CHRISTOPHER CHAMBERS
Ravenswood Middle School
Ravenswood, W. VA.
Christopher worked with the Kootaga Indian Dancers, and a local Explorer Post and Boy Scout Troop. Christopher created his own costume and learned authentic Native American dances. The group sets up a teepee display, participates in pow-wows, and performs at various local functions to convey and inspire respect for the Native American spirit. ★

FLAGPOLE PURCHASE

JENNIFER NYDEGGER
Broadwater High School
Townsend, Mont.
Jennifer started a fundraising project to provide a flagpole for her school. After receiving approval from school administrators, she solicited donations from local businesses, clubs and organizations. Driven by a desire to share her love of the American flag with her community, she collected $1,500 to purchase the flagpole. She organized a dedication ceremony for the new flagpole in November. ★

VOTER REGISTRATION

CHRISTINE VARNADO
Hattiesburg High School
Hattiesburg, Miss.
Christine developed an ongoing voter registration drive at her school. Her idea grew from an interview for a school paper with Ellie Dahmer, wife of slain civil rights activist Vernon Dahmer, who had fought for African Americans' right to vote. Christine was so inspired, that she pledged to invite every 18-year-old student in her school to register to vote. Her campaign began with a pitch to her principal for approval to initiate the project on school grounds. Once she received the OK, Christine approached two school clubs to secure $100 in funding, which she used to prepare postcards inviting high school seniors to obtain information on voter registration. She prepared flyers that read, "If you don't vote, you don't count", and posted them throughout the school. She also contacted the local newspaper and school paper to promote the project, a project for which Christine sets aside countless hours every week to address postcards to students nearing their 18th birthdays. ★

VOTER REGISTRATION

TYLER MANN
Roswell High School
Roswell, Ga.
Tyler founded and managed a voter registration project at his high school that aimed to register all eligible students when they turn 18. Tyler dedicated himself to this cause after learning that less than half of 18-20-year-olds were registered to vote in the 1996 presidential election, and only 38 percent actually cast votes. He first submitted his idea to school administrators, who lent their support to Tyler's project and worked with him to produce a list of all students' impending 18th birthdays. Tyler then requested and received a small donation to fund the project from the Parent Teacher Student Association, publicized it in school and local papers, and scheduled regular voter registration drives. ★

Improving the Environment

TRASH CLEAN UP DAY

ROBBIE POORE
Gauger Cobbs Middle School
Newark, Del.
Robbie organized a trash clean-up day in his community. Robbie also helped expose his friends to lessons in altruism, community service, and the notion that one person can make a difference. He enlisted over 20 kids from his neighborhood-all under the age of 15-to pick up trash on a hot summer afternoon. ★

SELF-GUIDED NATURE TRAIL

ROEERT SHEERER
Dike-New Hartford High School
Dike, Iowa
Robert designed and built a self-guided nature trail for a park in his community. For his Eagle Scout project, Robert planned and built a park trail with 20 signposts indicating different varieties of trees and vegetation. Members of his scouting troop helped him build the actual trail and research the plants and trees. All totaled, the project involved nearly 170 hours of work. ★

ENVIRONMENTAL SOCIETY

MONICA BRADY
West Philadelphia Catholic High School
Philadelphia Pa.
Monica founded the school's Environmental Society to help restore a sense of pride and community to her inner-city neighborhood. Monica sought and received grants from Chevron and Sun Company and negotiated with various local government agencies to clean up graffiti and plant trees and flowers. A successful organization was formed. ★

THE GREEN TEAM

JENNY REED
Chattanooga School for the Arts & Science
Chattanooga, Tenn.
Jenny formed the Green Team, an extension of her local 4-H Club, dedicated to conservation and environmental issues. The Green Team has adopted state parks and cleaned them up, planted food plots for wild animals, taught inner-city youth about the environment, and planned and participated in hands-on activities to preserve the environment. ★

ECO BOOK SAFARI

MELISSA BACHHUBER
Southwest High School
Green Bay, Wisc.
Melissa started this safari through her school's Environmentally Concerned Organization (ECO). Melissa and other ECO members visited eight elementary schools to speak about environmental issues and leave books for the younger students. Through a related contest, the elementary schools created posters for the books. The school with the winning poster was given the environmental books for its library. ★

PUTTING A STOP TO EROSION

CHARLES ANDREWS
Martha B. King Middle School
Bradenton, Fl.
Charles organized a project to stop erosion on an ancient Indian mound. With approval from the state, he began a drive for volunteers and equipment. Nine months later, Charles and his team of volunteers spent more than 250 hours laying erosion control matting and soil over the area and planting more than 470 plants to hold the soil and slope. ★

RECYCLING PROGRAM

DILLON DENISEN
Grand Meadow Public School
Meadow, Minn.
Dillon educated the public about the importance of recycling. Using posters and other visual aids, he developed an educational presentation explaining different recycling methods and how to build a compost pile. Dillion delivered his presentation at the National FLA/FHA Convention in St. Louis and at the Minnesota State Fair, where he won a gold medal for his work. ★

IMPROVING THE ENVIRONMENT

THE TOWN WATER SUPPLY

JODI HARPER
Grand Island Northwest High School
Grand Island, Nebr.

Jodi dedicated herself to educating others about groundwater protection. After extensive research, she tested her town's water supply and her neighbors' private wells. In the past four years, she has presented her findings and information to the governor, a seminar at Wesleyan University and to more than 3,000 elementary school students at the state Children's Groundwater Festival. ★

NEIGHBORHOOD BEAUTIFICATION

MARCY BLUVAS
George Norris Middle School
Omaha, Nebr.

Marcy organized a beautification project for her neighborhood. After attending an urban community improvement conference, she enlisted the help of 12 local children and their families to plant more than 4,000 flowers over an eight-block area. Marcy dedicated more than 200 hours to her project last summer, and continues to coordinate the care and maintenance of the landscaping. ★

CREATING A RECYCLING CENTER

AMBER NOVOTNY
Rosholt High School
Rosholt, S.D.

Amber started a recycling center for her community. After filling her garage with newspaper, she moved her facility to a vacant building provided by the town. Residents dropped off recyclable items, then she borrowed a dump truck from a family friend, loaded it, and drove it to a recycling outlet 40 miles away. ★

"I knew that the fund-raising efforts of others made possible the cancer research that saved my life, and it was my turn."

THATCHER BEAN

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Helping Animals

WILDLIFE CARE

MOLLY VANDEWATER
La Renia High School
Thousand Oaks, Calif.
Molly formed Wildlife Care of Ventura County, which rescues and rehabilitates injured and orphaned animals and releases them back into the wild. In her home, Molly has 32 bird cages, three incubators, 18 cages for other animals, and three outdoor aviaries. Wildlife Care, funded entirely by private donations, took in over 1,500 animals in a year. ★

OPERATION KINDNESS

SABRINA LOIUK
Arbor Creek Middle School
Carrollton, Texas
Sabrina volunteered at Operation Kindness, a non-profit, no-kill animal welfare shelter and organization. Sabrina has volunteered more than 800 hours, caring for the animals in the shelter, helping with adoptions, giving speeches on animal-related issues, and taking care of sick and newborn animals in her own home. In addition, she formed a pet club at her school to educate her peers. ★

BLANKETS FOR THE ZOO

AARON CRIM
Valley Junior High School
West Valley City, Utah
Aaron donated blankets to the Salt Lake City Hogle Zoo. After seeing an article in a local newspaper about a shortage of blankets for newborn and sick animals in the zoo's hospital, Aaron decided to make a project out of collecting them. He designed a flyer, found friends to help him, and was able to collect 68 blankets to deliver to the zoo. ★

HELPING ENDANGERED SPECIES TO RECOVER

JASON SHERWOOD
Hanna-Elk Mountain High School
Hanna, Wyo.
Jason performed volunteer work with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department's Conservation Education Unit. Jason spent an entire summer working with animals, helping two endangered species to recover. He also helped with the day to day operations at the Research Unit and led tour groups. Jason, who had experience with the town's volunteer fire department, helped fight a range fire caused by lightening. ★

ANIMAL SHELTERS

RACHEL SALZER
Rootstown Middle School
Rootstown, Ohio
Rachel volunteered for the past two years at the local Animal Protective League. Rachel volunteered every Saturday and most Sundays, during school breaks, and throughout the summer to help advance the cause of animal protection. Her activities ranged from simply petting the abandoned and mistreated pets to coordinating fund-raising activities to support the organization. ★

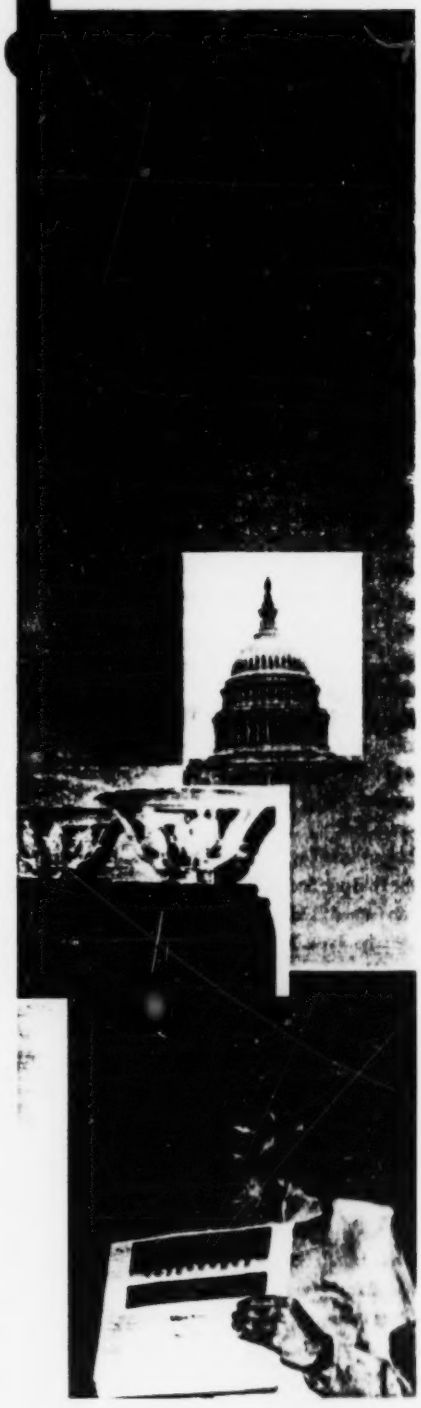
HUMANE SOCIETY VOLUNTEER

MEGAN WARDWELL
Les Bois Junior High
Boise, Ind.
Megan served as a volunteer for the local chapter of the Humane Society since she was 8 years old, and was named its Junior Volunteer of the Year. During the school year, Megan offered as much time as she could to the society, but during the summer, she dedicated as much as 50 hours each week to feeding and walking animals and cleaning their cages. She supported various Humane Society fund- raisers, helping to raise money to continue the society's work. ★

HUMANE SOCIETY SUCCESS

MEGAN RIDDLE
Vista Middle School
Ferndale, Wash.
Megan took her love of animals and applied it to a volunteer position with the local Humane Society. Megan was responsible for giving the animals the socialization skills they needed to be adopted by a loving family. She also helped with the production of a weekly TV show that encouraged viewers to adopt the many animals at the Humane Society. ★

Recognition Programs



CHILDREN'S TREE

KODY JORGENSON
Poston Junior High School
Mesa, Ariz.
Kody established a memorial for the children who died in the Oklahoma City bombing. He made it his Eagle Scout Project to plant the Children's Tree at the Arizona State Capitol. He involved state officials in the planning process and spent more than 125 hours collecting donations and organizing the project. The tree was dedicated by the State of Arizona on October 2, 1996. ★

MEMORIAL HALL

RACHEL WEST
West Side Junior High School
Greers Ferry, Ariz.
Rachel served as 4-H project coordinator in bringing the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Moving Wall to her area. Planning for the project began in the fall of 1994, when she put her club on the waiting list of sponsors. To promote the Wall's arrival, she arranged for public service announcements on television stations throughout the state. Rachel collected over $7,000 in donations to make the event happen. ★

"I never viewed my liberties, privileges, and boundless opportunities as an American with so much appreciation."

COURTNEY WHITE

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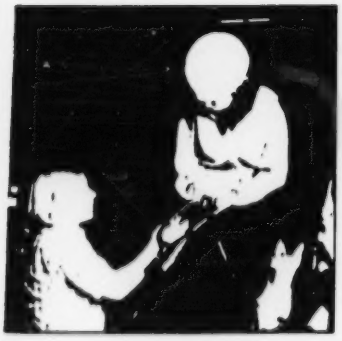
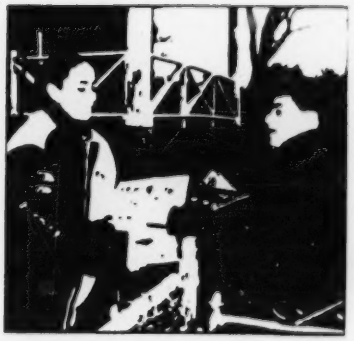

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